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[FOLLOWING THE WHITE BANNER.]

MAN AND HIS IDOL.

CHAPTER XXII.

THE DEAD ON HORSEBACK.

Thus conscience does make cowards of us all.

Shakespeare.

The public announcement of the death of Lord St. Omer was premature. It originated in a political stratagem. The Earl had gone to Paris for a few days, and the fact that his lordship had been confined to his room there with the gout, to which he was a martyr, had been magnified into the more serious statement.

Thus it happened to him, as it has happened to many another man of exalted station, to read the particulars of his own death—sitting in his own drawing-room—he having returned to England on the night as the announcement got into the papers in the morning.

Had he remained abroad another day he might have enjoyed the advantage of being his own postscript; he might have heard how friends and foes would sum up his character, what his virtues and his vices had been, how he had served and how he had neglected to serve his country, and, in short, what niche history would assign him in her temple.

Articles upon him were already written for the next day's papers when the dead man rode down Pall-Mall on his favourite bay mare, and walked into his club.

Languid members looked up and opened their eyes to their full width.

"By Jove!" drawled out several exquisites.

It was a sensation.

"What? St. Omer! not dead? Oh, you funny dog," cried a distinguished member of the Upper House, rising, and offering his hand.

"Dead! no!" said St. Omer; "better than I've been for months."

He did, indeed, look remarkably well for a man whose "remains," according to a veracious chronicler, "were being removed to the family mausoleum at Galescombe."

But though the gout had left him, the earl was not

easy in his mind. During his stay in Paris the countess had written him two piteous letters about her son Mark: and though he had cursed the young cub, as he called him, and protested that he would do no more for him, and behaved in such a manner that the French servants had believed him mad—that is, more mad than the English "milord" usually is—yet he felt from the first that it was impossible to let him continue to be in prison, when a cheque for a couple of thousands would release him.

That would be a disgrace to the family; yet it was trying, very trying, that again and again the young profligate should be placing the earl in this position. Forty thousand pounds would not cover all that had been swallowed up in the whirlpool of Mark's vices. And the worst of it was, that the "cub" was not grateful. He might growl out his tardy thanks; but for the most part, he took it all as his due, and as the penalty the earl might have expected to pay for his folly.

The peer's son-in-law had remained in Whitecross Street Prison ten days.

The truth is, that even the countess was not anxious for his immediate release. She knew that the associates forced on him in prison were not worse than those he would find for himself out of it; and, moreover, if he could get himself out of these difficulties without trouble, the St. Omer estates would soon have been swallowed up in his reckless extravagances.

Thus Mark Allardycote was a prisoner when the news of the earl's death got into the papers.

He heard of it at once.

The prison officials read it in the *Times*, and they soon came grinning and toadying about Mark. They did not know that he was the countess's son. They believed that he was the heir to the earldom, and the least devout of men are ready enough to worship the rising sun.

There was a bitter sweetness in this homage.

"By Heaven!" he muttered, as he paced the damp airing-yard with folded arms; "it would be worth going through anything to get to those cursed strawberry leaves. But that's impossible. Still, I might get the estates. There is only —"

He paused.

Reprobate as he was, it was only in his secret heart

of hearts that he cared to acknowledge that his mother and Blanche only stood between him and the estates, and that their removal would make him equal to an earl in wealth.

The idea did cross him, but he would not entertain it.

"And so the old boy's gone!" he pursued. "Well, he wasn't a bad sort, though there was no love lost between us. And now let's see. It was a lucky step my setting Broad on the fellow Kingston, as I did. He might have taken advantage of the earl's death, and the failure of heirs male, to put in his claim, and there's no knowing—there might be enough in it for a clever lawyer to twist into such a claim as would make the position of the countess, Blanche, myself, and Sandeon, deucedly awkward. By the way, I wonder if Sandeon has hunted up Steve Broad and satisfied him for that work? It would be awkward if the fellow turned nasty and let Kingston go scot-free again."

These were the reflections which the rumour of the earl's death awoke in his son-in-law's mind. But it left him nervous and excitable, chiefly because it put such a new phase upon his condition and prospects.

An hour after, to his astonishment, he received his discharge.

Mark had seen the inside of so many debtors' prisons that he had ceased to feel the degradation of being a prisoner very strongly. Still, no man utterly loses his sense of self-respect, and he was conscious of slinking rather than walking with erect and independent bearing from the prison door. He took the first cab that offered, and drove home.

He had expected to find a house of death.

To his astonishment he found the establishment in Belgrave Square lit up brilliantly as usual.

On being admitted, the first person on whom his eyes rested was the earl himself, who was leisurely descending the grand staircase.

Mark stared in blank astonishment.

"Well, 'sir,' said the earl, severely contemptuous, "so you've slunk back again!"

"I have slunk back," cried Mark, "and pray what have you done?"

For an instant the earl did not understand him. Then in spite of himself, a smile played over his features.

"What?" he said. "You thought to see me in my coffin, did you?"

"Why not? Where should a fellow look for a dead man?"

"You were no doubt hastening to shed tears of affectionate regret over my remains, and to indulge in empty regrets for lost opportunities of expressing your gratitude for my repeated favours?"

The earl spoke with sarcastic coolness. He despised his wife's son, and he could not hide his contempt.

Mark knew this, he knew that but for his mother's sake, St. Omer would have left him to rot in prison before he would have advanced a penny, and this irritated his evil nature.

"Gratitude!" was the contemptuous echo of the earl's words to which he condescended.

And he would have passed on, but the earl's temper was also roused.

"Stay, Mark," he said; "I don't expect from you any sentiment creditable to a man, much less to a man who is mean enough to put himself under repeated obligations to another on whom he has no real claims. But, understand this, clearly, understand this: I have helped you for the last time. Get into these disgraceful scrapes again, and you'll get out of them in your own way. Neither love for the countess nor consideration for the family shall induce me to come forward again. And let me add that had the news of my death been true, had you had the opportunity you sought of indulging in ribald contempt over my inanimate body, kicking the dead lion, in fact, that would have been the only consolation my death would have occasioned you. As you have squandered your income, so you have anticipated the legacy I had designed for you: every thousand I advance now, is, in one sense, from your own pocket. What you squander now you cannot enjoy hereafter, Understand that?"

They had strolled into the library as they talked. Mark Allardysse had put his back against the door and shut it with a snap.

So he now stood confronting the earl, and there was a wicked fire in his eyes, and an ugly smile distorted his face.

"I understand, my lord," he said, with a bitter laugh, "but let me give you a hint. You're too candid. Your charming nature really throws you off your guard and exposes you to danger from the unscrupulous."

"How! What does this mean?" cried the earl.

"Simply that if you don't look out, your charming candour will be your ruin. You're a clever fellow, no doubt. The toadying press call you a great statesman and far-seeing politician. That may be true of public business; but in your own affairs you're a child. Why, man, do you think I go about the world with my eyes shut? Do you think I leave it a matter of doubt and uncertainty whether when I get into a difficulty you will get me out? Not I! My measures are advisedly taken. I rely on you because I know that you must help me."

"Must!"

The earl's face was flushed with anger.

"Yes; you must do it, or take the consequences. What those are you best know."

"I know nothing," exclaimed the earl, "except that I have done for you more than any man in my position would have done, and that you have rewarded me with the blackest, the most shameless ingratitude."

"Pshaw! What would you have?" asked Mark. "You and your set are all alike. You want me to go down upon my knees and implore blessings on your grey hairs, like a fellow in a play. You want me to throw myself into your arms and slobber over you like a garlic-reeking Frenchman. You want—but Heaven knows what you want in the same line. And all for what? Because you've paid my debts to save your credit. No; I'll lend myself to no such play-acting. Go on fairly by me, and I'll act fair by you; turn rusty, jib, shy, and show your temper, and we shall see who's master. In a word, St. Omer, provoke me and I'll tear your name out of the peerage, and leave you without a penny-piece to bless yourself with!"

While Mark spoke, the earl's face had gradually become crimson, but at these last words his face changed to a dead white.

"You—you talk wildly, Mark," he gasped.

"Do I?"

"You don't know what you are saying."

"Perhaps not. Perhaps you don't know what I mean?"

"Indeed, no."

"Liar!" shouted Mark, starting from the door against which he had leaned, and stepping forward with clenched fists. "You are the false Earl of St. Omer, and you know it."

The earl staggered back. His lips parted without a word. He trembled like a man stricken with palsy.

Of all men in the world he would have kept his secret from Mark Allardysse.

"Who—who told you this—this idle tale?" he faltered.

"What matters? You see I know the truth. Do

you think me a likely man not to turn that knowledge to my own account?"

So Mark answered.

The earl was paralyzed. A bold, free, outspoken man at all times, he seemed now utterly at a loss what to say or how to act. His inclination was to treat the man and his statement with contempt; but in his heart of hearts he knew that he was right, and the cowardice of conscience overcame him.

While he stood trembling and uncertain how to act, there was a rap at the library door.

Mark opened it.

The countess presented herself. She was greatly agitated, and that sight of the earl and Mark evidently in fierce contest added to her alarm.

"What now, mother?" demanded Mark, sharply.

But the countess made at once to the earl, and, holding out a paper which she had in her hand, she said:

"Something dreadful has happened at Galescombe, dear. Read this."

He took the paper.

It was a telegraphic message addressed to the countess, and ran in these terms:

"The announcement of the death of the Earl St. Omer has led to a great commotion here. A claimant for Bedruth Hoase has started up, and is in possession. We are taking active measures to suppress a disturbance. Particulars in letter to follow. Tullett and Tullett, solicitors."

As his eyes ran over this message his excitement was intense.

"This is your doing, devil!" he said, turning upon Mark with a fierce, exched aspect.

"This! What?" answered the young man, sullenly.

"Read!"

The earl had crumpled up the flimsy paper after perusing it, and he now tossed it to Mark with a flavey contemptuous look.

Mark's evident astonishment at the purport of the message surprised him.

"'Commotion!' 'claimant!' 'disturbance!'" exclaimed the young man, as his eyes devoured the contents of the paper. "What the deuce has happened? Has he escaped?"

"Has who escaped?"

"Why, mother," said Mark, assuming suddenly a cordial tone, "what has now happened I have long foreseen. I know this claimant, and have taken measures to prevent any outbreak of this kind. The romance of the earl's death has precipitated what I hoped would never have happened."

"You hoped it?" said the earl, reproachfully.

"Yes. I may be a bad son and an indifferent man, as men go; but I'm not an idiot. While you are Earl St. Omer, I'm provided for; should another usurp the title and the estates, my claim will be gone—unless I can make a better bargain with the new earl. But come, this is no time for talk; we must be doing. You will go down to Galescombe, of course, instantly: I will accompany you; the countess will remain and keep Blanche company."

"Blanche!" cried the countess; "she is at Redruth House!"

"What, alone?"

"With Manton and the domestics. The state of her health obliged us to send her into the country for a few days."

Mark looked grave.

"You should have accompanied her," he said.

"But you don't believe that she can be in any real danger?" said the countess anxiously.

"How should I know?" said Mark. "But for anything we know to the contrary, Blanche may be sustaining all the horrors of a siege. At all events, we must be gone."

Half an hour afterwards, the earl and Captain Allardysse left the house for the railway terminus. This they had reached, and Mark was about to enter the door, when his man, Joe Leech, came up and touched his hat.

The man presented a deplorable figure. He had a black eye, the skin of his nose had apparently been rubbed off with a file, and one cheek-bone was adorned with a strip of sticking-plaster.

"Haloo! what upon earth have you been up to?" cried his master.

"Oh, it's nothing, sir!" responded Joe, with a lugubrious attempt at a smile, which strained the broken skin of his face, and made him wince.

"Nothing! You've been fighting?"

"Only a bit of a spar, sir, in the stable-yard down at the Running Rein."

"And how dare you, sir! How dare you present yourself to me in that condition? Haven't I forbidden you to fight?"

"But what right had he to go sayin' it just to aggravate me, and get my monkey up?"

"Who do you mean?"

"Why, a chap they call Steve Broad."

"Ah! and what did he say?"

"Why, captain, beggin' your pardning, he said as you

was a chent, a sneak, and a 'umbag!" Mark Allardysse recoiled, and his swollen face grew suddenly purple with rage. But, recovering himself with an effort, he said:

"Indeed! Well, there'll be a reckoning between me and Master Steve. Where is he now?"

"He did talk of going down to Galescombe," replied Joe.

"Did he?"

"He thought you was slinking down there out of sight," he said.

"Ah! it's well for him I was not. Well, I shall be back to-morrow, and shall want you."

Joe touched his hat and departed. Mark procured the tickets, and with the earl entered a first-class carriage. They were not communicative on the journey; Mark had many things to reflect on, and the earl always regarded his son-in-law as a sort of reptile, whose company was both dangerous and revolting.

CHAPTER XXIII.

AFTER GALESCOMBE CLUE.

"You scarcely thought," I said,

"I should return: you're wrong—'tis he is dead." EVERY mile that intervened between Daniel Kingston and the metropolis seemed to lessen the terror which was upon him, and had dictated his flight.

But Emmy, crouching at his side, in the railway carriage, noticed that this feeling was giving place to another. She saw a strange, fierce light in his eyes. The spasmodic working of the prominent muscles of his thin face—they formed, she will remember, long, deep cuts down either wasted cheek—also alarmed her. She saw that some strong passion was mastering him, and that under its influence he was goading himself up to what she feared to ask herself. Already the actions of the past night were like those of a man possessed rather than of the quiet, melancholy father who had watched over and tended her so fondly all her days.

They were alone in the railway carriage.

She was grateful for that. She had feared lest the two strange women, who inspired her with a feeling she could not describe, would have accompanied them. And Emmy had an instinctive feeling that their influence over her father would not have been for good.

Two or three times Daniel indulged in bursts of indignation and bitter reviling against the earl and his daughter, toward whom he appeared to entertain a fixed hatred, probably from the feeling that she had supplanted his own daughter in the position she held—and his threats of vengeance terrified Emmy, who clung to his arm and tried every art to soothe him.

"Life for life!" Daniel muttered, "that's the law, he's tried for mine and I must be even with him. Folks will despise me if I let him go. I'll have his life, I'll have his money and his life, his life!"

"Father!" cried Emmy, "what are you saying? It is very dreadful to have these thoughts."

"He would have murdered me," was the savage answer, ground between set teeth.

"But father, father, you forget who it was who forgave even his murderers!"

Daniel glared at her fiercely.

"If I forget, it's for your sake, Emmy, so 'tis not for you to throw it in my teeth. You indeed, to lecture me, and to throw Bible words at me, your own father; I that gave you the book, and bid you never part with it, because, because—" he stopped for moment as if he had forgotten the reason of his special injunction; then the memory of it rushed upon his mind—"Surely, Emmy!" he cried, "we never left that behind us."

"Yes, I was so confused by the hurry," she faltered, "that I did not think of it."

"And the writing in the cover of it might have made me an earl and you a lady!" exclaimed the excited man, starting up and looking wildly from side to side. "We must go back, we must fetch it. I wouldn't lose it for thousands and thousands. Oh Emmy, how could you forget it, and I told you how precious it was?"

As it was impossible to stop the train, even for an earldom, the excited man subsided into his seat, and presently quieted down, though he continued to moan and moan over the lost treasure.

Was his case singular? Is it a rare case for a man to clamour about the Sacred Book, while in thought and action he is violating its essential principles? I think not. I don't cite Daniel Kingston as a solitary instance of those ready to tear the book in struggles for the binding. He virtually did so. I cannot excuse him; but he was sorely tried, and twenty years' waiting at the Porcupine had not been the best school of Christian heroism.

It was fair-day at Hersford, so when they reached the station, they suddenly found themselves in the midst of a great stream of joyous folks who had come in from the country round bent on a day's enjoyment. To these, Daniel Kingston with his serene face and in his short cloak, with its worn fur collar, and with the flapping coat-tails hanging below it, soon be-

came a figure of fun; many a jest was passed at his expense; but those disposed to rough practical joking, were deterred by the calm, pure, angelic face of the girl clinging to his side.

On finding himself again among crowds, Kingston's fears revived, a settled conviction started up in his mind that they had been watched from London by the earl's agents, and these he looked for in the most unlikely persons.

"See there!" he whispered, as a rosy, big-boned, black-haired, plough-boy, straddled by them. "That's a disguise: don't you see the red on his face, like the actors wear? that wig's false. A round frock 'll cover anything. Did you see how he looked at us? Come along, dear, come along."

And he dragged Emmy a few paces until another innocent individual would arrest his attention, and he would enlarge upon the certainty of his being a murderer in disguise.

These renewing terrors made them avoid the fair, and, indeed, the town itself; and they wandered away they hardly knew in which direction—any settled purpose with which Daniel Kingston might have come there having for the moment been driven from his mind by the sense of a necessity for personal safety.

The day was very lovely. To Emmy Kingston it seemed the most beautiful of all the days she had ever seen. It was very seldom that she escaped even for a day from gloomy London, and when she did, the country came upon her with an overpowering loveliness—like some vision of her sleep. Even ill-health made her more keenly and sensitively alive to every sight, and sound, and scent; but, above all, the balmy purity of the air seemed to give her new life. As they passed through the green lanes, under spreading trees, just tinged with the gold of autumn, and over meadows knee-deep in luxuriant grasses, she wondered how it was that those to whom such scenes were open could endure to hord together in the wicked city, and felt that, amidst so much beauty, and calm, and peace, she could even lie down and die without a murmur.

They had walked a mile at a good sharp pace.

Then Emmy felt the weakness and weariness of the over night coming upon her; and she begged to rest, to sit upon a stile, or lie down in the pleasant grass. Kingston demurred petulantly; but there was no help for it, and he was about to consent, when a turning in the road brought them in front of a quaint, old-fashioned, wayside inn.

The house stood back from the road, and in the middle of the open space before it was a spreading elm, from a branch of which hung the sign. Under this was a trough at which a piebald cart-horse was drinking, the fresh water dripping from its lips. On either side of the open space rough seats—settees they were called—ranged under hawthorn hedges, and upon them one or two carters, ploughmen, and rough country people sat discussing affairs in their slow, deliberate fashion.

Daniel Kingston eyed these men suspiciously, and as one in red waistcoat scored with pearl buttons looked up inquiringly, he started and half-turned to go. But Emmy's pleading face raised to her father's stopped him, and they entered the house.

A rosy, comely, blue-eyed, woman stepped out of the bar as they went in, and regarded them with a curious yet motherly gaze. The pale face of the young girl evidently struck her with surprise; she saw at once that she needed rest and food, and then commenced a struggle in the good woman's mind as between her natural kindness and the suspicion that her guests were probably penitentes.

Kindness prevailed, and it met with its immediate reward when, on her suggesting a glass of wine for Emmy and bringing it, Daniel threw down a sovereign and appeared indifferent about the change. Then the landlady set herself with a will to making them comfortable, and by her bright, cordial manner succeeded even in soothing Daniel Kingston to a certain extent, though she expressed her opinion, privately and confidentially, to the ancient chamber-maid that he was "as mad as a March hare."

That was after an incident which occurred in the afternoon.

Kingston had wandered to the open window of the inn room—for though autumn was far advanced the day was genial enough for the window to be thrown open—and was looking furtively out at the men sitting over their beer, when his eye lighted upon the sign swinging from the old elm-tree.

With a cry of surprise he drew back.

"Emmy," he cried, "do you see that?"

"What, father?" she asked.

"That sign! This is called the 'Bedruth Arms!'" "Yes sir," said the landlady, whose name, Mary Lattice, was written under the sign, "that's the name of the house, sir. Out o' compliment to the earl, you know, sir; his place is just below."

"St. Omer's place?" faltered Kingston; "Is it so near?"

"Yes, five minutes' walk. It's a fine place, Bedruth

House is; they calls it small, but Lor' bless you, you might quarter a regiment of soldiers in it."

"You know the earl?" asked Kingston, fixing his eyes on the woman in a manner which alarmed her.

"Well, I have seen him," she replied, "but not often. It was the people before my time that called this the Bedruth. It was kept by Master Bramber's brother—Bramber's my lord's handy man down at the house, you know."

"Indeed!"

He turned from her with an angry scowl, that fierce light from which Emmy had shrunk in alarm glowed again in his eyes; the muscles of his face worked more painfully than the girl had ever seen them. The mention of the earl seemed to drive him to the verge of madness.

How soon would his feverish brain pass that verge?

Emmy asked herself that question, as rising, she noticed the landlady's meaning look, and threw her arms about her father's neck.

In time the paroxysm spent its force.

As the day wore on, the Bedruth Arms gradually filled. People from the fair dropped in, bringing their wives and sweethearts. So there was much laughter and drinking, and the mirth grew so boisterous, that Emmy was frightened, and longed to get away to the bedroom they had secured, determining to pass the night there.

Daniel Kingston, naturally of a simple, genial temperament, fond of pleasant company, and given to friendly usages, was beguiled by the hearty frankness of one and another, into taking first a cup of ale, then a little brandy, then more brandy, until Emmy, who had at first rejoiced to see him won from his dangerous self, became alarmed lest he should yield too fully to the temptation of the hour.

In the over-wrought state of his brain, and suffering as he was from long abstinence, she trembled at the idea of what might result. So, though the men grew coarse and loud, the women clamorous and free, she dared not quite his side. Songs were sung, and rude jests spoken and laughed over; fierce oaths ringing brutally upon the ears, and drunken quarrels followed; then active challenges to fight, and the shrill voices of interposing women; and still Emmy sat looking on, with her large eyes and her pale face, noting little of what the clouds of tobacco-smoke revealed, as in a dream, but only watching her father.

She saw how his very nature seemed changing under the drink, and her heart ached at it.

She watched the stages by which he grew from moody indifference to geniality, then to wild, extravagant speech and action, then to a maudlin state, in which he cried, and laughed, and talked of his "secret," and made part confidants of people he had never seen before, and who were too drunk to understand half he said.

It was most unfortunate. For such a trouble Emmy not prepared, and she knew not how to act. Still she felt that her place was by her father's side, and at length she feigned sleep, in order that he might have no pretext for sending her away.

Overcome with weakness and fatigue, perhaps also by the polluted atmosphere, this feigning passed, ere long, into reality; and she slept but so lightly, that what passed around made a distinct impression on her brain.

Thus she was conscious of new arrivals as the night wore on. She heard a rush of shouting, singing, swearing, drunken men from the fair, and above the turmoil and confusion, she distinctly heard a man's voice shouting:

"Master Bramber," he said, "Here, along wi' ye: hast heard the noo, man?"

"Noo?—what noo?" answered a rough voice, that sounded as if the speaker came from the end of the room as he spoke.

"Why, 'tis said Redruth 'll have a new master. The earl's dead!"

"The earl dead?—the earl dead?"

It was echoed by twenty voices all over the room. One of those voices was that of Daniel Kingston, who at the first sound had started up as if shot.

Emmy's opening eyes lighted on him as he stood grasping the back of his chair; his eyelids red, his eyes glaring, his face white as moonlight.

"Who says it?" he asked in a fierce voice; but quite coherently. The news had sobered him.

"I do!" cried a burly farmer-looking man.

"You!"

"Yes; I heard it in London an hour ago."

"In London?"

"Aye; I be just come in by train."

"You are? And you heard it—where? Who told you?"

"Nay, 'twas in the papers. I sawt wi' my own eyes."

Kingston looked at him for a moment with a face terrible in its countenance; then he burst into a hollow, unnatural laugh.

"A good joke," he said; "ha! ha! Good! good!"

and yet a scurvy trick to play on me, and—and my child here."

He turned to Emmy, and tears started in his large wild eyes.

The stranger was evidently pained and startled.

"Art thee mad, man?" he said, bending over a group who had all turned to look at Kingston. "What is to thee whether the old lord be alive or dead?"

That inquiry touched on the chord which vibrated so painfully through the man's nature. He drew himself erect, his head was thrown back, his hand raised authoritatively, and he said in a solemn voice:

"It affects me, because—if the earl is dead, I am Lord St. Omer, and Bedruth is mine!"

An instant's pause.

Then a wild, loud, uncontrollable burst of laughter echoing through the room from end to end.

"Father, dear father! What have you said?" cried Emmy, grasping her father's arm.

He did not hear or answer her. He stood amidst the laughter, firm, calm, unmoved, as if it had burst upon a rock. Those near him looked at him half-convinced; the more remote who did not see his face, and could not feel the effect of his manner, subsided in ribald jibes and senseless outcries.

The farmer who had originated the scene by his news was evidently puzzled; but taking up his glass, he said:

"Well, my lord—if you really are my lord—I'll be the first to congratulate you on getting your earldom, if you have got it?"

And he drank with an inclination of his head.

The rest took up the cue, and "The earl! the new earl!" resounded above the shouting, laughing, and clattering of pewter vessels which made the uproarious scene.

CHAPTER XXIV.

FOLLOWING THE WHITE BANNER.

The dark night trembled, and the very trees shivered with warning as they went.

Old Play.

DANIEL KINGSTON stood in the same attitude, drinking in those half-jesting, half-drunken cries as if they had been true homage offered to him on his real accession to the earldom.

He had even, it was evident, some vague idea of addressing the drunken crowd, momentarily recruited by stragglers from the village, for he had one foot upon his chair as if about to mount it, when instantly his wanner changed, and he uttered a sharp vengeful cry, and darted forward.

The farmer who had brought the news thrust himself in his path.

"What be it, man?" he demanded.

"There! there! Don't you see?" cried Kingston, pointing fiercely toward the door.

"Nay, keep thyself quiet loike;" said the farmer, "thou'rt like a wild-cat. Eh, but you don't go."

Kingston had tried to dodge his way past; but the eyes of the farmer had caught the imploring face which Emmy raised toward him, and detained him with a huge hand and a wrist of iron.

"Let me pass!" shrieked Kingston. "There he is going. By Heaven it'll be the worse for you if he escapes. Seize him! Hold him, there!"

The words were shouted over the farmer's broad shoulder.

All eyes instinctively turned toward the door, and lighted on a man dressed as a groom, who had idly sauntered in, as if to look for a companion, and was about to squeeze himself out through the crowd hanging about the door.

The sound of Kingston's voice seemed to startle him. He hesitated, and his self-consciousness pointed him out as the man to whom attention was directed.

Twenty rough hands were at once laid on him, and he was dragged forward, a piece of attention which he fiercely resented.

"Here he is, my lord! Here he is!" cried the jeering crowd.

The burly farmer without losing his hold stepped aside, and by the flickering light of the flaring candles Daniel Kingston confronted Steve Broad.

Not easily cowed, the rascally groom was still an ignorant and a superstitious man. He believed firmly in Kingston's death. That any man unaided should escape from the horrible vaults into which he had been turned, he did not credit; and moreover, he had satisfied himself that up to that day his victim had never returned to his humble lodgings. It was therefore with a shudder, and a sickening feeling that he looked upon the white, haggard, passionate face before him.

"Wretch!" cried Kingston, "do you dare face me here?"

Steve's only reply was a furtive glance to ascertain the possibility of escape.

"You thought me dead—murdered by your hand. Your coward face confesses it. But I live, and as surely as I live, I will bring you to justice for your crime."

"It's a mistake," faltered Broad. "The man's wrong. I don't know him. Never see him till this minute. Take my oath of it. What do he call himself?"

"He calls himself," said Kingston, folding his arms proudly, "what he is—the Earl of St. Omer. In that name I call on you, gentlemen, to arrest that man. I charge him with an attempt to—"

Before he had time to complete the sentence, Steve Broad sprang forward and with his clenched fist dealt him a blow in the face which sent him staggering backwards.

The stout farmer, who was called Nolan, instantly seized the aggressor.

"You infernal scoundrel!" he cried, "how dare you strike a cowardly blow like that? Oh, you may struggle, but you won't go."

He felt himself, indeed, held in a vice.

"D'ye think I'm going to let an old fool like that take away my character," whined the bully now turned sneak. "He's a ravin' lunatic, he is. What do he mean by goin' about the country calling himself the Earl of St. Omer, when the earl's alive and kickin', and what does he mean?"

"Stay," interposed Nolan, "the earl's dead."

"Dead! who says it?"

"It's true. To-night's papers have it."

Steve looked utterly dumbfounded.

"Who's heir?" he asked, after a moment's thought.

"There's none as I know of. There's no son. The title ceases," unless he added, his grim look relaxing to a smile, "the poor wretch yonder is right. He swears as he's the true earl."

"And as I'm a living man, I do believe it," cried Steve Broad.

The effect of this assertion was electrical.

Daniel Kingston still lay on the ground, poor Emmy kneeling by him, and staunching the blood which flowed from his mouth with her thin shawl. A group bent over him, pitying him and execrating the coward who had struck him.

The rest of the room, too, had gathered round.

And no sooner did Steve Broad utter those remarkable words, than all eyes were turned on him, and every mouth was open with expectation.

"It's the truth," said Steve, perceiving the sensation he had created, "and I'll stick to it. I lied just now. I said I didn't know that man. I do know him. I've seen him before, and I've heard his story when he didn't know I could either serve him or go ag'in him. 'I'm an earl's son,' says he to me, 'and my child's a lady in her own right!'"

"He said this?" asked Nolan, "he's said it again to-night; but that makes it no more like to be true."

"No," said Steve, "but I'll tell you what makes it likely. You see how he flew at me? Very well; he'll do it again, when he comes up to time. And ag'in and ag'in. Why is that? 'cos he thinks I tried to do him a mischief. And why should I try it? 'cause I was bought over to do it. I didn't do it, look you. I did him a service, only he didn't know it. I let him escape when I ought to have put him in the hole. But why was I ever bribed to hurt him? Who'd care to hurt a poor devil like that? Would you? Would I? Not we; it was they as feared that he'd stand in their shoes. They know'd as his story wasn't all moonshine."

This speech had its due effect on Nolan.

"Let us understand this man," he said, "what have you done to this stranger here? And who set you on to the business?"

But Steve Broad felt that he had committed himself quite far enough. Self-crimination was not by any means his purpose, he had only spoken from a strong conviction of the truth of Kingston's claims, and a notion that by doing him a service he might help to wipe out the very ugly blot his character bore in the possible new earl's estimation.

So with a sullen air he said.

"I've let out enough, I should say. I believe this fellow's the right heir; and if the dead man didn't why should he have tried to put him out of the way?"

"He did try then?"

"Try!"

The sneer which accompanied this word gave it an effect which satisfied the listeners.

Even Daniel Kingston himself, bleeding and helpless as he appeared, had caught enough of what had passed to make him forget for the moment the brutal conduct of this man. Scrambling to his feet as best he could, he cried out eagerly:

"You are a scoundrel; but you know—tell them that you know the truth."

"I have told 'em," was the answer.

"You hear him!" exclaimed Kingston, wildly excited, "he was the earl's secret agent, and you hear him!"

"Yes, yes!" cried the noisy, boisterous, excited throng. "Long live the earl! Long live St. Omer!"

The cry taken up spread through the room. The crowd upon the stairs, which had grown dense as the strange rumour of what had happened, had spread to those outside, took it up. "The earl! the earl! Long live the earl!" burst from a hundred mouths.

Then Steve Broad, mounting the great table of the room, which creaked under his weight, took off his cap, and waving it led a fierce outburst of three cheers.

"Again! again! again!" he shouted as the cheers mingled into hunting cries, and every species of yell and scream, successively died away.

The scene was ludicrous yet impressive. In the midst stood Daniel Kingston, proud, erect, but pale as death, his face, his linen and his white hands stained with blood. Beside him, Emmy, her face quivering with terror. And around the wild, disorderly tipsy mob, a few women still mingling with the men, waving hats and pots and giving themselves up to the mad excitement of the moment.

At the farther end of the room was a little knot gathered about Bramber, the earl's man, who with fierce gesticulation, was endeavouring to prove that all this was a delusion, arguing, persuading, appealing to their common sense. He had grown purple in the face, and his arms were working like those of a telegraph.

His oratory had its effect on his listeners and groans and hisses met the cheer of the new earl's party. This did but add fuel to the fire; the element of partizanship was introduced, cheer and counter-cheer followed in quick succession, cries and taunts and personalities passed from man to man, blows succeeded, and the uproar became intolerable.

In the midst of it a stentorian voice was heard shouting:

"To Redruth House!"

A mad outburst of cheering succeeded this proposal. "Chair him! chair the new earl!" shouted another voice. "No, no!" and "yes, yes!" flashed out from every quarter of the room. The crowd, now densely packed, swayed to and fro in its clamorous excitement, growing every moment more riotous, more disorderly.

At length the proposal for the chairing gained general favour. The party for the earl proved itself the strongest, and in spite of every protest, Daniel Kingston, seated in a chair, was raised to the shoulders of four of the stoutest of the party and borne from the room.

It was proposed to offer a similar honour to Emmy; but she shrank from the ordeal in terror, and Nolan, alarmed at the commotion he had helped to raise, adroitly passed her to the arms of Mrs. Lattice, who stood on the landing protesting fruitlessly against this outrage, and she was safely conveyed to the landlady's own bedroom.

Meanwhile the drunken rioters sallied forth in their insane purpose.

The night was calm and still.

The heavens bright with innumerable stars bent over the silent village.

Suddenly the repose of the hour was broken as there issued from the doors of the inn, the shrieking, yelling, riotous mob. Litigation pine-branches and impromptu torches, threw a lurid light on the wild mob; it lit up the face of Daniel Kingston, white but calm, as he looked down from his elevated, but perilous seat. The light also, augmented by that of stable lanterns, and a stray bull's-eye or two, revealed the flushed faces and waving arms of his besotted partisans.

In front of all marched a woman, tall and gaunt, wearing a man's hat and waving a white apron tied to a clothes-prop; this was the earl's banner, and as the drunken woman waved it to and fro, she hiccuped out snatches of a popular air, which was taken up by those about her and rang shrilly through the silent night.

Scarcely had the procession set out before the advocates and opponents of the new earl's claims commenced hostilities. Their cries mingled in one confused chorus, such as might have emanated from the throats of maddened fiends. Then the throwing of stones, the pelting with mud and turf commenced, soon to be followed by blows of cudgels and vicious encounters, in which the fist played the chief part.

In all this there was no standing still. It was a moving scene of violence, the direction it took being steadily towards Redruth House.

The outline of that stately edifice rose black against the sky. No lights were visible in its ranges of windows, save one, and that was momentarily obscured by the swaying trees.

"To Redruth! to Redruth! Three cheers for the earl! Three cheers for the earl's daughter! Hurrah, hurrah, hip, hip, hurrah!"

So rang the burden of the mob.

And following the white banner, and the women's voices, and the unsteady figure of Daniel Kingston, as the chair to which he clung reeled from side to side, the victorious crowd wound down the green-lanes, and out into the carriage-road, and so reached the noble gates which formed a fitting entrance to Redruth Park.

(To be continued)

In the comparatively short space of eighteen months upwards of five thousand five hundred children, under the age of two years are reported to have met with untimely deaths. Of these, two hundred and twenty-four are returned as the victims of "wilful murder."

WOMAN AND HER MASTER.

By J. F. SMITH, Esq.

Author of "The Jesuit," "The Freiste," "Minnigrey," &c.

CHAPTER I

Women, by whom ye are—the source of joy—
With cruel wiles ye labour to destroy;
Vainly we fly—our ruin ye pursue,
Yet blame in us those arts first taught by you

Marlow.

THIRTY years ago, when railroads had only just commenced tracing their iron wrinkles on the fair face of merry England, the road between Colchester and London—the main artery connecting the eastern counties with the metropolis—was one of the most frequented in the kingdom, and certainly not the least beautiful, as a specimen of quiet English scenery.

The lands on either side of it were highly cultivated, snug, cosy, comfortable, fat-looking farm-houses, nestled in shady nooks—neat villages, with their old-fashioned gable roofs, and picturesquely churches, met the eye of the traveller at each fresh point of view. The whole country presented an image of content, sleeping in the lap of plenty.

The farm-houses, villages, and churches, we are happy to inform our readers, still remain, but the road is comparatively deserted: the coaches, with their high-bred, mettlesome horses, glittering harness, and sleek, bustling drivers—an important class of persons in those days—have disappeared; the latter, "fallen from their high estate," as Dryden hath it, in many instances have degenerated into landlords of village ale-houses—or worse, been reduced to drive the "busses" which ply between the towns upon the line and the nearest stations.

The only exception to the beauty of the road was that portion of it which ran through Lexden Heath—a barren, wild, uncultivated waste, which commenced a short distance from Colchester: for miles it produced nothing but stunted grass and furze, or here and there a solitary tree, which, instead of relieving, rendered the desolation of the scene more apparent.

Considerable portions of the heath have since been reclaimed and planted; but sufficient remains in its original state to convey an idea to our readers—should they ever visit the spot—of the dreary, wretched waste it must have been at the period our tale commences.

On the 15th of November, 1823, about four o'clock in the afternoon, the Norwich Times, driven by Dick Gurney—"Honest Dick," as he was called—whose exterior was rough and unseemly as the shell of the cashew-nut, but whose heart resembled the ripe, melting kernel within, was seen making its way over Lexden Heath. A cold, easterly wind had seized upon the faces of the outside passengers, pinching and puckering the features of the old, till they resembled frost-bitten pippins, and changing the ruddy glow of health upon the cheeks of the young to a sort of stagnant, purple hue.

The rain, too, fell in torrents; down it came—splash, splash—upon the oil-skin umbrellas, with a dull monotonous sound, then poured off in continuous streams upon the roof and seats of the coach, or, by way of agreeable variety, over the shoulders or down the necks of the passengers, who were too wretched even to grumble at each other, but sat with desperate resignation, patiently enduring the discomforts they could not escape.

The day was indeed a bitter one; the sky presented a dense, unbroken mass of clouds—not a rent in them for a ray of sun to peep through—and the heath looked more than usually desolate. No living thing was to be seen, not even a solitary rook returning to its nest—all had sought some shelter. Charity herself had scarcely ventured forth on such a day, upon her errand of love and mercy.

Still Dick continued to drive steadily on, till he reached a sharp turning in the road, about a mile distant from the house where he changed horses, when he suddenly drew up: several frost-bitten noses emerged from the thick woollen comforters of the passengers, and more than one voice demanded if anything was the matter.

"I should think there was!" answered the coachman, in a tone of commiseration; "look there!"

He pointed with his whip to the figure of a female, decently but thinly clad, crouching at the foot of an old oak-tree, whose leafless branches groaned and sighed, as they waved in the blast over her head, as though instinct with human love and pity.

"What are you doing there, my poor woman?" inquired Dick; "have you lost your way?"

"No!"

"Waiting for the coach?"

"I have no money to ride," answered the female. "Hang the money!" exclaimed the kind-hearted man; "jump up! I would not leave a dog on the road such a day as this, much more a human being! So, jump up, I say, and welcome!"

"I am going with my child towards Colchester!" replied the forlorn creature, for the first time looking up; "every hope I have in the world depends on my reaching it! But I thank you for your kindness," she added gratefully, "although I cannot profit by it."

If Dick, who had seen much of the world, had been struck by the language and manner of the speaker, he was still more so by her countenance. Although her delicate features were sharp and pinched by want, sufficient traces remained, amid the wreck of suffering and passion, to tell how beautiful she once had been; her long hair, black as the wing of night, had escaped from the shawl drawn over her head to protect her against the pelting rain, and fell upon the neck and shoulders of the wanderer, in thick, limp, half-curled masses, resembling clusters of torpid snakes; her face was pale as the impress of death's seal; but the eyes—the large, lustrous eyes—relieved its ghastly, corpse-like hue. There was a tale of misery and suffering in their eloquent expression.

It was a countenance which, once seen, would haunt us like a dream—pursue us through the blanket of the night in after years—and never be forgotten.

Carefully sheltered beneath the folds of her shawl was a female infant, about four years old. There was no mistaking the parentage of the child, so closely did it resemble its mother, who held it nestled to her aching breast, in the hope of imparting the warmth she had ceased to feel herself.

"You will never be able to reach Colchester tonight!" observed the coachman, at the same time dismounting from the box; "but I'll tell you what you can do! About a mile from hence is a lone house upon the heath, known by the name of the Travellers' Rest. It is a decent place enough—and, although the landlord does not bear the best of characters, his wife is a good-hearted, kind creature, who will take care of you. Everyone speaks well of Mabel!"

"Mabel," repeated the woman, "who formerly lived in the family of Lady Briancourt?"

"The very same," replied Dick; "she left the hall five years since—no one knew why or wherefore—turned away for some slight fault, I suppose—and shortly afterwards married a dissipated fellow, named Ned Cantor."

"Did she marry him?" exclaimed the female, in a tone of painful surprise; "she merited a better fate. He is a bad—bad man!"

"You know him?"

"No; but I have heard of him!"

The outside passengers began to grow impatient, and a white handkerchief was seen rubbing the steam from the window on the inside of the coach; shortly afterwards a pair of sharp, grey, ferret-like eyes appeared peering through the glass.

"I must be off!" said Dick; "but first let me see your child."

The wanderer drew aside her shawl to disclose the features of her infant, which looked up piteously into the pale face of its mother, and faintly smiled.

"Poor little thing!" said the kind-hearted man, placing a crown-piece in the little outstretched hand; "there—no words—I hate 'em. Good-bye! Make the best of your way to the Travellers' Rest, and if Ned Cantor makes any difficulty in admitting you, tell him Dick Gurney sent you."

Whistling to avoid hearing her thanks, the speaker remounted his seat.

"Pretty time you have wasted!" testily observed a stout, comfortable-looking person who was riding on the box; "where's her parish?"

"A wide one, sir—the world."

"Humph! You had better have left her there, then!" was the churlish reply.

"I'll thank you, sir," said the coachman, "for that rug," pointing to one he had lent the passenger to throw over his shoulders; "can't spare it any longer!"

"Nonsense, Dick—I shall get wet through."

"Can't help it, sir—so will that poor creature."

"Why, you don't mean to give it to her?" exclaimed the gentleman, in a tone of indignant surprise.

"Indeed, but I do!" answered the coachman, firmly.

"Of course you can take it!" said the passenger, slowly pulling it off; "I had some thoughts of giving her sixpence, but now—"

"You have thought better of it," interrupted Dick, finishing the sentence for him; "here, my good woman," he added, throwing down the rug—a large and thick one—to the wanderer; "wrap your child in that, and take care of yourself."

Crack went the whip, and off started the horses at a brisk pace—for they had got chilled in the rain by the delay; their benevolent driver not waiting even for an instant to receive the thanks which the object of his bounty faintly murmured forth.

When the coach drew up at the post-house to change horses, one of the inside passengers—the gentleman with the grey, ferret-like eyes—got out, and, to Dick's surprise, informed him that he should proceed no farther.

"Why, you are booked to London, sir?"

"I know it, my friend—paid one pound six for my

place—not likely to forget it! The fact is, I have forgotten some deeds and papers of importance—left them at the house of a client of mine—I must return directly."

"Nothing sooner than the mail," observed the landlord of the posting-house, who had drawn near whilst the luggage of the speaker was being removed. "Excellent accommodation—this way, sir."

"Anything more, sir?" inquired Dick, pointing to the packages—which consisted of carpet-bag, dressing-case, and a tolerably large portmanteau.

"Nothing," said the gentleman; "thank you—all right! Take them in, waiter. By-the-bye," he added, "what were you saying to that beggar-woman on the heath, just now?"

"She was no beggar, sir; but a poor creature on her way to see some friends in Colchester. I directed her to a house where she could obtain shelter till the morning—that was all."

"To Ned Cantor's?"

"Yes; do you know him?"

"No," replied the possessor of the remarkable grey, ferret-like eyes; "but I heard you name him. It was very kind of you! Poor wretch—I really felt for her!"

"Did you?" said Dick, "where?"

"Where!" repeated the gentleman, "why in my heart, to be sure!"

"Ah, I thought it wasn't in your pocket!" drily observed the coachman. "Or I should have noticed it!"

And away stamp'd the speaker on his wooden pin—for Dick Gurney some years previously had lost his leg, from the upsetting of his coach by a flock of sheep. Being a man of some property and independent spirit, he did not wait to receive the usual half-crown, which the passenger was reluctantly drawing from his well-filled purse.

The character of the benevolent coachman is not an imaginary one. Many a time, when a boy, have we ridden on the box with him, and witnessed acts of his charity as kind and eccentric as the one we have described.

No sooner had the Norwich Times driven off, than the passenger informed the landlord that he should require a messenger to ride a few miles for him over the common.

"Let me see," said the host, deliberating with himself; "who can I send?"

"It must be some one you can rely upon."

"Of course, sir!" replied the man; "is it far you want to send him?"

"About eight miles. He will have two notes to deliver: one to Sir Charles Briancourt—the other to a tenant of his—a fellow named Ned Cantor, who lives somewhere upon the heath. I will write them directly. Meanwhile, order me some dinner—the best you have in the house."

"Certainly," answered the landlord, with an air of alacrity; "Bandy-legged Jem shall take the brown mare, and be ready in five minutes."

"That will do!"

Lawyer Quirk, the name of the passenger, seated himself in the coffee-room, and wrote the two notes. The first he carefully sealed with his family crest—a snake in the grass, with the motto "*Cave*" beneath it—it was addressed to his client, the baronet; the second he merely wafered. Just as he had finished, the messenger entered. He was a thin, short, sharp, vixen-faced looking old man, with iron-grey hair, combed smooth as a terrier's coat over his forehead. His eyes were quick and piercing, but furtive in their expression—for you no sooner caught their glance than they avoided him. His legs—from having passed at an early age the greater portion of his days in the saddle—were bowed like a parenthesis. Hence the *soubriquet* by which the landlord had designated him, and by which he was generally known for miles round the country. Jem's walk, in consequence of his deformity, was slow and ungainly. Perhaps the consciousness of it gave him an awkward, heavy air; but once on horseback he was a different being—all life and animation. He was not only acknowledged to be the best, but the most fearless rider in the county.

"Who are you?" inquired the lawyer, raising his head from the table.

"Jem!" was the short, and not over civil reply.

"Generally called 'Bandy-legged Jem,' I believe?"

"Yes, by *fools*!"

"Hem!" said Mr. Quirk, not over-pleased with the retort; "now, Jem, here are two notes for you. I suppose you can read?"

"I suppose I can!"

"Of course, so much intelligence could never have been acquired without the art of reading—unnecessary to ask the question!" added the lawyer; "merely a habit of mine. Do you know Ned Cantor?"

"I know no good of him!" answered the post-boy.

"No matter, Jem—it is not necessary that you should know any good of him. All I require for you to know is his place of abode—his domicile."

"I know that."

"Ride there, then," continued Mr. Quirk, "as fast as you can—deliver him that note—the one with the wafer

—then cut across the heath to the hall, and ask to see Sir Charles Briancourt."

"He will be at dinner."

"No matter for that; tell the butler that you come from me, and he will at once admit you."

"How am I to tell him your name?" demanded the messenger.

"No matter," said the man of law, who had private reasons for not wishing to be known; "you can describe me."

"Oh, yes!" answered Bandy-legged Jem, with a satirical grin; "I can describe you! Iron grey, rising sixteen hands, slightly spavined, no quidder, but devilishly inclined to shy—sire, a broken-down hunter, turned out of a good stable—dam, a roan filly, rest of pedigree unknown."

While the post-boy was thus describing the appearance of the lawyer, the latter secretly winced and writhed—for he felt assured that the satirical old man knew him, and had taken the occasion to avenge himself upon him for the observation he had made about his legs.

"Yes, yes," he muttered, somewhat confusedly, "that will do—they cannot fail to recognise me!"

"I should think not!" replied Jem; "the pictor is as like you as if it had been put in the *Hue and Cry*."

"Away with you!" exclaimed Mr. Quirk, looking very red in the face—for his name in early life had appeared in the respectable publication alluded to, although he deemed the circumstance forgotten; "and when you return, I'll give you a sovereign! But, hark ye, no more portrait painting," he added, with an uneasy look, "if you please! I have no wish to sit a second time for my likeness!"

"Just as your honour pleases," observed Jem, whose anger was considerably mollified by the promise of the sovereign. "I'll soon be back."

The next instant he rattled past the windows of the room in which the conversation had taken place, mounted on the brown mare.

"Hem!" muttered the gentleman, looking after him; "that fellow knows more than I suspected; but I have no time to think of him, when the web I have been weaving in solitude and patience for years is threatened to be swept away. How fortunate that I met her. How changed she is," he added, "all but the eyes of hate had failed to recognise her. She can't live long: once in the grave, the rest is clear and easy."

With this Christian-like reflection, Mr. Quirk drew his chair towards the fire, and rang the bell for dinner. He was one of those heartless beings who could have eaten it had it been spread upon his mother's coffin-lid. And yet all the world spoke well of Lawyer Quirk: his voice was so very soft, and his manners—he often used to boast that his manners had been a fortune to him.

CHAPTER II.

I talk to stone—I'll talk to it no more.—*Sheridan Knowles*.

THE little public-house on Lexden Heath, known by the name of the Travellers' Rest, was one of those humble places of accommodation which decent poverty selects. It was frequented chiefly by pedlers and packmen, now almost an extinct race, since the rail has brought the goods of Manchester and Sheffield to every village door. As we before stated, it was kept by a man named Ned Cantor, formerly a gardener in the family of Lady Briancourt, who, by dint of perseverance, to say nothing of his good looks, had persuaded the pretty Mabel, her ladyship's own maid, to take him for better or worse—but not till she had lost her situation. Many had been the speculations upon the subject, but none knew the cause of her dismissal; from the day of her leaving, her mistress was never heard to mention her name or inquire after her fate.

Ned was a tall, rakish, good-looking fellow, with long, black, curly hair and dark eyes—it was generally supposed there was a half-cast of the gipsy in him. Although capable of great exertion, he detested work—a day or night passed in the woods, poaching or ferreting, the rabbits on the common, fatigued him less than an hour's regular labour; although he had been brought up as a gardener he took no delight in flowers: the little patch of land round his cottage, which, properly cultivated, would have supplied him and his family with vegetables throughout the year, appeared little less desolate than the rest of the heath from which it had been reclaimed.

Mabel—a fair-haired, blue-eyed girl, the very type of patience—on the contrary, was as industrious as her husband was idle and dissolute. Although she had no one to assist her, the house was remarkable for the extreme neatness and propriety with which it was kept: the brick floors were daily scrubbed and the furniture dusted—much to the annoyance of her husband, who disliked so much splashing and washing. Like most lazy people, he had an antipathy to water.

Mabel was seated by the fire, patiently plying her needle. From time to time she would raise her eyes to watch the gambols of her child—a sparkling, gipsy-like

Little fairy—who had inherited not only the flashing eyes and dark hair of its father, but much of his wayward, passionate disposition.

If Ned loved anything on earth, it was this child; he idolized and spoilt her. Whenever Mabel scolded her for any little act of mischief, the father would take her upon his knee, smother her with kisses, and bid her do it again if she liked, and pay no attention to her mother. But the child, despite his lessons, did pay attention, and would often watch the first opportunity of sliding from his knees, and, creeping to the side of Mabel, kiss away her tears, and whisper:

"Don't cry, Meg good girl now!"

Although so young, the infant appeared to comprehend that the love of her father was a selfish love; for, despite his indulgence, she evidently preferred her mother. Ned was proud of her beauty—she amused him. Often would he observe to his wife, as he stroked the long silken curls of the child, that she would one day give some fine young fellow the heartache; and conclude by expressing a hope that she might play her cards well.

Mabel, when she heard him, involuntarily used to shudder, although she was far from divining what he meant.

"What a fearful day," thought the mistress of the Travellers' Rest, looking through the narrow casement, "at all events, we shall have no guests to-night to disturb us with their drinking and riotous debauch. Would to heaven Ned had chosen any other way of living!"

There was a faint knocking at the door of the cottage.

"Come in!" said Mabel, in no very amiable tone, for she supposed it to be one of the usual frequenters of the house, whose absence she had rejoiced in.

The door opened, and the wanderer, drenched to the skin, notwithstanding the protection of the rug which Dick Gurney had thrown her—walked, or rather staggered, into the room.

Despite her poverty-stricken appearance, the kindly-hearted woman rose, and placed her in a chair near the fire.

The stranger threw aside her shawl and hood. For a few moments the two females sat and regarded each other in silence. The poor wanderer was the first to speak.

"Mabel, have you, too, forgotten me?"

At the sound of her voice, a sudden light, a flood of recollection, broke upon the hostess of the Travellers' Rest. She started from her seat, threw her arms round the speaker, clasped her with passionate fondness to her bosom, crying and sobbing like a child. The woman permitted rather than received her caresses with the utmost impatibility.

"My dear young lady! my sweet, kind, good, mistress! you in such a state. You, whom I have seen the idol of your father's house—followed, worshipped by everyone!"

"Even so!" said the outcast, calmly; "indebted for the rage that cover me to charity. There are those in the escutcheon vault at St. Botolph's that would burst in indignation from their cemeteries, could they behold me!"

"They would—they would!" sobbed Mabel.

Little Meg, awed by the appearance of the stranger, and terrified at the grief of her mother, began to cry and cling to her.

"Is that your child?" inquired the stranger.

"It is," replied the hostess.

"And are you happy?"

"Happy!" repeated the woman, with a burst of feeling. "I have never been happy since you left! Ned does not ill-use me, *as yet*; but he is not the husband I expected to find him. Your kindness and indulgence have spoilt me for a poor man's wife. I looked for a companion and a friend—a guide and staff through life—instead of which I gave myself a *master*. All he required was a drudge to prepare his food and work for him—a sort of human house-dog, to watch his home in his absence, and welcome him on his return; but no master! You are drenched, weary, hungry perhaps? Thank God I have still the power of serving you without Ned's knowing it!"

Mabel conducted her guest to the inner room, taking the children with them. As soon as she had changed their dripping garments for such clothes of her own and little Meg's which she thought her husband would not recognize, she desired her own child to leave the room.

"I won't!" answered the infant, snuggly; "and I'll tell father!"

"What will you tell him?"

"That you have given the woman with the big eyes that pretty gown—and then he'll beat you!"

The mother colored to the very temples. She would willingly have concealed the extent of her misery from her former mistress.

"I thought, Mabel," said the latter, reproachfully, "you told me Ned had not ill-used you yet? I can comprehend now all you have endured—coldness, unkindness, blows! Heaven help us!" she added; "we are both very wretched!"

"It is the first time," exclaimed the mother of little Meg, bursting into tears, "that I ever deceived you! Forgive me—pray forgive me!"

No sooner did the wayward child perceive the grief of its parent, than its ill-humour vanished in an instant. Springing into her lap—for Mabel had sunk upon a chair—she threw her little arms about her neck, and began kissing away her tears.

"Don't cry, mamma—don't cry! and Meg will be a good girl, and do as you bid her! Father shan't beat you!"

"Go!" said her mother, taking both the children by the hand, and leading them to the door; "go and play together."

The stranger's child looked wistfully in the face of its parent.

"Go, my love," she said.

And the two little creatures left the room.

The instant they were alone, Mabel barred the door, to prevent interruption, should her husband or any of the usual frequenters of the house suddenly arrive.

"Do you recollect it?" she said, pointing to a curiously carved, high-backed, oaken chair, covered with faded tapestry.

"Ay," said the stranger, mournfully, "it stood formerly in my dressing-room at the hall. I have heard say that my grandmother worked it."

"When I married," resumed the mistress of the Travellers' Rest, "I brought it with me. If you remember rightly, the back is made to open: we discovered the secret when children. See if you can find the spring."

After some little effort, her former mistress succeeded. The chair, which was carved in massive oak, and as old, probably, as the reign of Elizabeth, had been contrived with a double back, which unfolded like the leaves of a book, on pressing the fingers in one of the interstices of the open-work.

No sooner had she touched the spring, than the outer division flew back, and a small green silk purse fell, with a clink, upon the floor.

"Take it!" said Mabel; "it is yours—your parting gift! Ned dreams not that I possess it! And even if he did, who has so good a right to it? I kept it from him," she added, with a sigh, "thinking one day to give him an agreeable surprise; or as a resource, should poverty and sickness overtake us."

"I shall not require it," observed the outcast, mournfully. "My days, nay, my very hours, are numbered; but this discovery has relieved my mind from a deep anxiety. Mabel, I intend to make one last attempt to soften the heart of my mother!"

"Of Lady Briancourt!" interrupted the woman, bitterly. "She has no heart! It is stone—stone!"

"Still it shall be tried! Whether I succeed or fail, I feel I have not long to live! To your care, therefore, I confide the only treasure I possess—the proofs of my marriage and the legitimacy of my child! Guard them," she added, seizing her by the arm, and fixing her dark eyes upon her, "as you would the life of your own offspring! Let no bribe—no temptation—induce you to give them up! They will be sought for far and wide, high and low, by my unnatural brother!"

"Not even Ned's ill-usage—poverty—starvation, my dear young mistress, shall wring the secret from me!" exclaimed Mabel, sinking on her knees, and confirming her promise by an oath. "Never will I resign them, but to those whom you appoint!"

"To George Stanley, if he lives," whispered the stranger, faintly. "If not, to my child, when she has a husband to protect her!"

The papers were carefully placed in the little recess, which was just large enough to contain them, and the chair restored to its usual appearance, when they were disturbed by a loud knocking at the door of the chamber.

"It is my husband!" whispered Mabel. "For heaven's sake take the purse, and pay for whatever you require! Alas!" she added, "that even such a word should escape my lips to you!"

"Poor Mabel!" sighed her mistress; "I understand you!"

Mistress Cantor! Mrs. Cantor!" exclaimed Bandy-legged Jem, who had just arrived upon the brown mare "is your husband at home?"

"No!" replied the hostess of the Travellers' Rest, opening the door of the inner chamber. "What do you want with him?"

"I don't want him," replied the snappish little, old man; "but there is one at the post-house that does!"

"At the post-house! Who?"

"That's a secret!" said the post-boy, glancing at the same time significantly at the row of bright pewter mugs suspended against the wall. Mabel took the hint, and filling one of the largest with her best ale, placed it before him.

"I said it was a secret," repeated Jem, after taking a hearty draught; "but of course Ned has no secrets from you! It is Sir Charles's lawyer, Mr. Quirk! He thought I didn't know him," added the speaker, with a chuckle, "but he was mistaken."

At the name of Quirk, the two females exchanged glances; it was evident that the name of the lawyer had produced a painful impression upon them.

"Here is a note for Ned," said the messenger, pointing to the one with the wafer. They were both lying with the address downwards, upon the table.

"And the other," observed the wanderer, "is for Sir Charles Briancourt!"

Jem looked at her with surprise, as much as to ask how she could have guessed that.

"I see it all, Mabel!" whispered the unhappy lady "Quirk has recognized me, and this letter is to put my brother on his guard, to prevent my obtaining access to the hall. I must accompany him."

The inducement of a few shillings which the landlady offered easily prevailed upon Jem to give the poor woman, as he called her, a "lift" to the great house.

"It's a bargain," he said, "but make haste."

Mabel brought her former mistress her own cloak and hood—which not only promised to afford her protection from the storm, but effectually concealed her features—and began to set out her humble table with the best food in the place.

"I cannot eat," said the object of her care. "My heart is too full!"

"A glass of wine, then?"

The outcast raised it to her parched, thin lips—then set it down again, having barely moistened them.

"I'm a goin'!" exclaimed Jem. "Can't wait."

"One moment—only one!" replied the unhappy woman, terribly excited. "I cannot part with my child without a kiss—a word—a blessing."

Catching up the infant, who was playing on the hearth with little Meg, she pressed it passionately to her breast, and imprinted a fond kiss—a mother's kiss—upon its cheek.

"Take it, Mabel," she said, "and guard it till my return—should I return. If not, God of the fatherless protect my child, and bless you, Mabel—bless you as you keep your oath."

The last words were uttered in a tone so low, that the post-boy could not hear them.

"Thee beast as light as a feather," observed Jem, as he lifted the stranger on the rug which Mabel had assisted him to arrange by way of pillow behind the saddle. "Brown Bess will scarcely know that she is carrying double! Mind and give the note to Ned," he added, turning to the landlady, "the instant he returns!"

Poor Mabel's heart was too full to reply. She remained standing at her cottage-door till Brown Bess was no longer in sight; then returned to look after the infant, whom she found asleep, overcome with fatigue and hunger, upon the hearth—little Meg watching beside her.

"She says she is hungry, mother," said the child; "give her some bread. Is the woman with the big eyes gone away?"

"Yes."

"And will she come back?"

"I hope so."

"She shan't take the little girl, if she does!" exclaimed Meg, petulantly; "bad woman, to let her be hungry and give her no bread! I should hate you," she added, bitterly, "if you served me so!"

Despite her sorrow at the fate of her former mistress, and the embarrassment she would be in to account for the presence of a strange child, should Ned return before its mother came back to claim it, Mabel could not avoid feeling pleased at the sympathy which Meg expressed towards the little stranger.

"Her heart," she thought, "is all right, if evil counsels do not pervert it!" And then her thoughts involuntarily reverted to her husband.

Raising the sleeping infant in her arms, she gently woke it from its slumber, and then sat it down to the table to eat. The eyes of the helpless creature sparkled at the unusual sight of food; but after the first mouthful it began to cry, and ask for its mother.

"She will soon be back."

"Marian will wait, then," said the child, "for mamma."

And, young as she was, she kept her resolution, although from time to time her eyes glanced longingly towards the food upon the table.

"Did you hear that, Meg?" said her mother, willing to incite a lesson; "would you wait for me?"

"Not if I was hungry," said her daughter, bluntly.

In about half an hour Ned Cantor returned. No sooner had he read the note which Jem had brought him than he asked after the woman who had called.

"Gone," said his wife, with a look of marked surprise; "but how did—"

"No matter. Is that her child?" he added, fixing his eyes upon the little stranger.

"It is, Ned," replied Mabel; "for God's sake, do not harm it!"

"Harm it, you fool! what should I harm it for?" answered her husband, brutally. "No, no! Take care of it till I come back—it's worth its weight in gold!"

So saying, he left the house, and took his way across the heath.

CHAPTER III.

But then false guardian of a charge too good;
Thou mean deserter of thy brother's blood—
Cold are those lips which warned the world before,
And those love-darting eyes shall roll no more.

Popa.

THE Dowager Lady Briancourt was the only child and heiress of one of the most ancient as well as wealthy families in the county. Her father, a fox-hunting squire, who doated upon her, indulged her in every whim: the natural consequence of which, as might be expected, was that she became headstrong, proud, and capricious. At the age of eighteen, her father informed her that he had contracted a marriage for her with his neighbour, Sir Charles Briancourt.

"Never, papa!" exclaimed the spoiled beauty, "he is old."

"What has that to do with it?" demanded Squire Broadlands. "He is rich—his covers join mine—so say no more about it."

It was the first time the heiress had ever been contradicted, and it is impossible to say how far she might have carried her opposition to her hitherto indulgent parent, had not a circumstance occurred which rendered it a matter of indifference. This was nothing less than the marriage of Captain Stanley, on whom she had long placed her affections, and fondly imagined that they were returned. The day after the intelligence, the young lady sought her father in the library, and with a pale countenance but firm accent, announced her intention of accepting the husband he had proposed for her.

"Of course you will, Clara!" observed the old gentleman, who was just preparing to beat the home cover. "I knew you would. Bless me," he added, "how pale you look! Kiss me! there, you silly puss—Sir Charles will make you a good husband. If he doesn't, I'll shoot him, and you will have all the family diamonds."

And Clara Broadlands had the diamonds—for within a month after the conversation we have narrated, she gave her hand to Sir Charles Briancourt, who, five years afterwards, obligingly left her a widow, with one son—the present baronet—and a daughter named Clara—the former mistress of Mabel—the outcast and wanderer of Lexden Heath.

Lady Briancourt, like all proud and passionate natures, was extremely fond of power. Her feelings towards her daughter received their first shock from the fact of her father bequeathing to his grand-daughter the reversion of his estates. It was a fatal legacy—from that hour her brother hated her, and her surviving parent scarcely regarded her with a mother's love.

But indifference became hate when, at the age of eighteen, Clara Briancourt eloped with George Stanley, the son of her mother's former admirer, whose preference for another had so deeply wounded her pride and vanity. She not only forbade her her presence, but returned all her letters supplicating forgiveness unopened.

In the hope of bettering his fortune, young Stanley had been induced to accept a situation in one of our colonies. His wife, whom it was arranged he should send for, never heard of him from the day of his departure, neither could she discover the address of the friend who had so interested himself in his favour as to procure him the appointment.

Vainly did Clara struggle in the little cottage in Devonshire to which she had retired to maintain herself and child. She had a school first, that failed; next took in needlework, it was all in vain: a withering influence seemed to surround her—slander had been at work. Those who once spoke kindly, turned aside at her approach; the landlord seized upon her furniture for rent.

Without a shelter, and only a few shillings in her pocket, the heart-broken girl, who had been reared in the lap of luxury, started on foot for Essex, in the hope of melting the obdurate heart of her stern mother.

We have already described her arrival at Lexden, and the meeting between her and her former attendant, Mabel, whose dismissal from the family of Lady Briancourt had been occasioned by the assistance she had rendered her young lady at the period of her elopement with the son of the man whose memory her ladyship hated.

The baronet and his mother were seated in the magnificently furnished drawing-room of the old family mansion. The shutters were closed, and the velvet curtains carefully drawn, so as to exclude the least breath of air.

The person of the dowager was tall and stately, retaining, even at the advanced age of fifty-three, considerable remains of personal beauty. Although richly attired, and surrounded by all that wealth could give, the expression of her countenance would have convinced the discriminating physiognomist that she was anything but happy. She was cold and reserved in her manner, like one continually on guard against herself. Her household, which was numerous, obeyed her least look; but there were few—very few—who either loved or esteemed her.

Her son resembled his father. He possessed a good,

gentlemanly figure, but a face devoid of all expression. He was devoted in his attentions to his mother, who, in addition to her own paternal estate, had a very considerable jointure upon that of her late husband: hence the baronet was anything but rich.

Often would Lady Briancourt, when alone—in allusion to her offending child—murmur to herself:

"Had she chosen any other than the son of him who won my affections and then slighted them, I could have forgiven her; but never shall his grandchild inherit the broad lands of my forefathers!"

Even at the moment she made the declaration, a secret monitor whispered to the haughty woman that "never" was a long word.

"Charles," said her ladyship, addressing the baronet, "I have been thinking that this is but a dull life for one of your age."

"I do not feel so," answered the sycophant, pressing her hand respectfully to his lips. "I am never dull where you are!"

"I often wonder you never felt disposed to marry!"

Sir Charles winced, like one who feels that he is about treading upon treacherous ground.

"There are the Howards, for instance!" continued the lady. "Fine girls!"

"Too fine for me!" replied her son. "Besides, there is another reason!"

"What is it?"

"Their mother was related to one who I have heard, offended you deeply."

Lady Briancourt coloured through her rouge, so sensitive was she at any allusion to the Stanleys.

Fortunately, at this moment the butler entered the room.

"Well, Harrison," said the baronet, with a look of surprise, "I did not ring!"

"I am aware of it, Sir Charles, said the servant

"but there is a person below with a letter for you."

"Let him send it up."

"He refuses, Sir Charles."

"Bid him take it away, then."

"That he equally declines doing! He says that he has ridden over from the post-house with it; and from what I can gather, it is from Mr. Quirk, who has met with some accident! I thought it best, therefore—"

"You are right, Harrison—quite right!" said his master. "Show the fellow into the breakfast-room! I'll see him instantly!"

So saying, he followed the butler out of the room.

Although Lady Briancourt did not choose to express it, she felt equally anxious with her son to know what could possibly have happened to Mr. Quirk, who was no less deep in her confidence than the baron's.

"What can have occurred? she mentally thought;

"has the wretched young man returned?"

A tremulous hand was heard upon the handle of the drawing-room door.

"Who is there?" demanded the dowager, angrily.

She knew it could not be Sir Charles, and she had a great objection to be intruded on.

The door opened, and a spectre, such as had sometimes haunted the unnatural parent in her dreams, entered the room. It was her daughter Clara; her face so pale and thin, there was no mistaking death's impress. Clasping her hands, she advanced, uttered the name of "mother!" and sank at her feet.

"Well," said the haughty woman, steering her heart against her, "what would you—gold? You know the conditions on which I will supply you!"

"I am dying!" said the poor girl.

"And you come to ask my forgiveness?" interrupted her ladyship; "there is only one price at which you can obtain it."

"I know—I know! the inheritance of my child!" murmured the dying Clara; "but no, you cannot ask it. Your heart is human, though your speech is cold and harsh. If I have been disobedient, am I not punished? I have been driven from my home, reduced to eat the bitter bread of charity; I have braved the night-wind and the storm, that I might hear you whisper sweet words of pardon ere I die! Mother," she added, "I am dying at your feet for want—for food; will you not pardon me?"

Lady Briancourt trembled violently. Hard as she was, there was something in her child expiring in her presence for want which shocked even her iron nature, when her son hastily entered the room, followed by two of the servants.

"Take that woman away!" he said, pointing to the prostrate form of his sister. "How dare you let Lady Briancourt be thus intruded on?"

Clara clung frantically to the folds of her mother's velvet robe.

"No—no!" she shrieked; "not till she has forgiven me!"

"Charles," said her ladyship, "take her away; but let her not be harshly used!"

"Mother—mother!"

"She is mad!" exclaimed the baronet, not wishing the domestics to suspect the nearness of the tie between them. "Remove her at once!"

No sooner had the hands of the menials touched the person of the unhappy outcast, than she started to her feet, and, with a gesture of great dignity, waved them from her.

"Back!" she said; "I shall be carried hence, but not by such hands as yours! The escutcheon pall will cover my remains, and the plume be borne before me! How the fiends will laugh, and angels weep, to see those who starved the heiress of Broadlands—hunted her to the grave—mourn—ah! ah! mourn for her—and follow her to the grave! Back!" she repeated; "I claim the right to die beneath my father's roof!"

"Charles," whispered the horror-stricken Lady Briancourt, "she is dying—send for assistance!"

"Too late, madam—too late!" said the baronet. "Aye, too late!" repeated the dying girl, whose reason began to wander. "Ye cannot save your victim, if you would! Too late! But I forgive you," she added; "mother, I forgive you, if you will only let me lay my head upon your bosom, and breathe my last sigh there!"

The servants looked at each other, and drew back. From the agitation of their mistress, they felt convinced that the wretched woman who had obtained access to her presence was no impostor, but the young and once beautiful girl, whose name, despite her ladyship's prohibition, was still whispered with regret by the old domestics of the family.

"Leave the room!" said Sir Charles. Addressing his mother, he added, as soon as the domestics were gone, "Shall I remove her to my chamber?"

Taking her silence for assent, he clasped his sister by the waist, and attempted to carry her from the drawing-room. The dying girl shrieked and struggled so violently, that in the effort she burst a blood-vessel; and in an instant the unnatural brother was deluged with the crimson stream.

Lady Briancourt fainted.

"On you," said Clara, "on you and on your race. The inheritance you have sinned for shall escape your grasp. My image haunts you! My child—my poor, motherless girl!" she exclaimed, with a burst of feeling, "who will protect her?"

"God will protect her," she added, after a pause. "Hear it, Charles, and tremble! To Him I leave her."

With these words the outcast, whose last thoughts were of her child, sank upon the richly-carpeted floor, and expired at the feet of her stern and cruel parent.

Despite his habitual self-possession, the baronet was bewildered by the sudden death of his sister. It would be impossible, he felt, to hush up the affair. An inquest in all probability, would be held, and much transpire which it was his interest should be buried in oblivion. His first care was to see Lady Briancourt conveyed to her apartment; the next, to send for Quirk.

Jem was started off upon Brown Bess, with strict orders to return with the lawyer. On his way he called at the Travellers' Rest, to inform Mabel of what had happened.

"Only to think," he added, "the poor young lady dead—starved, I heard one of the servants say, by her own mother, and Sir Charles, the baronet."

Poor Mabel! her heart beat wildly at the intelligence; and without considering the folly of such a step, she started off on foot towards the hall. When she arrived there, the servants would have refused her admittance; but she broke through them, and made good her entrance to the drawing-room, where she found Sir Charles directing the servants to remove the body to some outhouse, for it was that of an impostor.

"She was no impostor!" exclaimed Mabel, resolutely; "but your sister, and, after the death of her cruel mother, by her grandfather's will, the heiress of Broadlands. You have murdered her between you," she added; "but God, in His own good time, will avenge her!"

There was no disputing the testimony of one who from girlhood had been the favourite attendant of Clara Briancourt. Muttering a curse for her officiousness, Sir Charles retired, and the faithful Mabel remained to perform the last office of affection towards the dead.

During her absence from the Travellers' Rest, not only the child of Clara disappeared, but her own. Ned's rage and grief were so real, or so well affected, that they disarmed even his wife's suspicions; for whatever his feelings might have been towards the offspring of the outcast, he could have no interest in harming little Meg. Whether he really had a share in the abduction of the infants, time, perchance, will show.

(To be continued.)

THE Government of India has sanctioned the sum of 2,48,788 rupees for establishing telegraphic lines from Rajmahal via Maldah and Dinaopur to Gohhaty, with a branch from Gohhaty to Sylhet and Cachar.

SINGULAR DISCOVERY.—A few days since the workmen at the carriage department of the Royal Arsenal were employed in sawing up a large elm-tree, when a bird's nest, apparently that of a sparrow, with three

egg, was found in a cavity of the timber, but having no outlet to the surface. From its position it is considered that the nest must have remained in the tree for a number of years. The nest, with the wood surrounding it, was placed in a glass-case for preservation at the museum of the establishment.

THE Empereur is expected at the Camp of Châlons about the 12th August, where he will remain several days, to be present at manœuvres of the troops and hold a general review.

THE House of Commons has shown during the session a disposition to put a check upon railway companies becoming also steamboat proprietors. There is an important principle involved in this question, and one in which the public have a deep interest. It is simply whether the great railway companies are to become the carriers of goods and passengers, not by land only, but also by sea, and thus be enabled to establish a monopoly against which the public would be helpless. The House of Commons seems disposed to say no, and to this the community generally will be ready to say ditto.

PLOTS AND PLANS.

A CHEERFUL little summer room, with lozenge-pained casements, shaded with white muslin curtains, and dim with the overhanging foliage of morning glories. There was a cottage piano in the room, and on a round wicker table beyond, lay a broad vine-leaf, full of fragrant, freshly-gathered strawberries, with a blue-ribbed "gipsy" hat close beside it, and a tuft of clover-heads and buttercups betokening a woodland ramble somewhere. And you wouldn't have needed to look twice, to assure yourself that the coquettish gipsy hat belonged to none other than the blooming young lady who was leaning against the window casing, assiduously engaged in twisting a small glove round and round her finger. She was just one of those trim, dimpled, bright-eyed little creatures whom you prefer, as far as real life is concerned, to all the impossibly-beautiful damsels of novel-lore; a girl, in short, towards whose pretty waist your arm felt an instinctive curving inclination, and whose lips reminded you of a scarlet verbena with the dew on it.

And how that fat, bald-headed old gentleman, her father, could have the heart to scold her, as petulantly as he was certainly doing, was among the inextricables! These fathers are so little susceptible to their daughters' graces!

"A pretty idea!" said the old gentleman, the bald spot on the crown of his head growing perfectly pink with indignation. "In love indeed! What business did you to fall in love without my permission? Never heard of such a preposterous affair in my life! Haven't I always told you that Job Jefferson was to be your husband?"

"But, papa!" interposed the young lady, half-crying, half-laughing, "Job Jefferson is forty years old, and wears a wig!"

"What, then, Miss Minx? Isn't he just as good? You ought to be very grateful that a man worth thirty thousand pounds has been kind enough to take a fancy to you."

"I'm not a bit grateful!" pouted Julia Glenn, giving the little glove an unmerciful twitch.

"Never saw such an improper state of mind in my born days!" ejaculated Mr. Glenn, holding up both his hands. "Now look here, young lady, do you suppose it is right for you to be holding stolen interviews with Arthur Latimer, over the raspberry hedge, at the foot of the garden, after you suppose I'm snug in bed, hey?"

"But, papa—"

"I know what you're going to say—you fancy you're in love with him! Bah, nonsense! I'd like to see Job Jefferson among the raspberry briars!"

"So should I!" observed Julia, with an irresistible inclination to laugh.

"He's not the fellow for such silly sentimental nonsense. Now, I tell you what—I'll have no more of this! One week from to-day you shall marry Job Jefferson! No use in your thinking you are going to throw yourself away on a briefless lawyer like Arthur Latimer."

Julia tried to remonstrate, but old Mr. Glenn obstinately refused to hear a word, and hustled out of the room in an inflammatory state as a box of lucifer matches.

"I don't care!" sobbed Miss Julia; "sooner than marry Job Jefferson, I'd drown myself in the river!"

As Mr. Glenn trotted explosively out of the room, he tumbled up against a solid specimen of masculine humanity—no other than Sam, the coachman, gardener, and factotum in general—who sustained the shock with great composure.

"What are you here for, blockhead?" demanded Mr. Glenn, furiously.

"Come to bring up this dish of strawberries," coolly returned Sam.

"Where did they come from?"

"Miss Keturah Jones sent 'em—the old maid next door—with her compliments to Squire Glenn."

"Hang the old maid! I wish she'd keep her strawberries and compliments to herself."

"Shall I tell her so?" stolidly questioned Sam.

"No, you fool! The only way to keep her from marrying me in spite of myself, is to put up a stone wall."

"I'll mention it to her, sir," said Sam, turning away.

"Stop, blunderhead! you'll do no such thing."

"What did he say, Sam?" sighed Miss Keturah over the garden fence, when, rather more than half an hour subsequently, Sam sallied forth to pull radishes for dinner.

"Said he was much obligeed, marm."

"Anything else, Sam?"

"Something about getting married, marm."

"Dear—how very strange, Sam! What could he have meant?" giggled the elderly damsel, giving her artificial curls a toss.

"Don't know, marm!"

"Sam, here's a shilling for you. It was so kind of you to drive the pigs out of my garden yesterday!"

"Thank 'ee, marm!" said Sam, grinning, as Miss Keturah tripped into the house.

"Ah—h—ha—a!" said Mr. Glenn. "Sorry your apron pockets aren't a little more reliable, Miss Julia! Didn't suppose this note was going to fall into your old father's hands, did you?"

Mr. Glenn adjusted his spectacles, and read the folded bit of paper in his hand yet a second time, muttering to himself:

"This evening at eight—under the beech-tree just beyond the garden wall—get succeed in evading the vigilance of heartless parent! Ah—ha! Will you, Mr. Arthur? We'll see about that! Perhaps there'll be a third party in this interesting elopement!"

And Mr. Glenn fell into a fit of chuckling that lasted full a minute and a half. As he turned round at its conclusion, he saw Sam standing in the doorway, looking rather more "wooden" and expressionless than usual.

"Sam, you scoundrel!"

"Sir?"

"How long have you been staring there?"

Sam put on an injured look.

"I isn't a staring, sir. I just this minute come to ask if you'd have the new shrubbery sowed down in clover or mixed grass?"

"Mixed grass."

"Yes, sir."

"Sam!"

Miss Keturah's false curls were just visible above the garden fence.

"Marm!" ejaculated Sam, dropping half a pint of grass seed in his astonishment.

"Can I depend on you, Sam, my good man?"

"Yes, you can, marm!"

"Well, then, Sam, I feel it my duty to speak to your dear master about a conversation I last evening overheard between his daughter and Latimer, the lawyer. I was weeding my flower-borders, and—ahem—they were close to my fence, and—and—"

"I understand, marm—you couldn't no ways help hearing!"

"That is it, precisely, Sam. And this morning I was peeping through a crack, and saw her come and take a folded note from under the raspberry bushes. Now, you see, I feel quite a—sisterly interest in Julia, and I really think I ought to warn her excellent papa!"

"Well, marm, p'raps you ought!"

"But you see, Sam, if I were to go to the house, folks might gossip, and—"

"I see, marm! S'posing you was to meet the squire somewhere—under the big beech-tree this evening at eight o'clock, say—I'll tell him you've got something to say to him?"

"Oh, Sam, I don't think I could, possibly!"

"Try, marm," said Sam, soothingly.

"Well, if I must—but, dear me, how my heart palpitates!"

"Take a dose of ginger and brandy," suggested Sam.

"Good gracious, there's your master coming, and I haven't got on my best gown!"

Away scuttled Miss Keturah like the wind, and Sam resumed his work with matchless equanimity.

"Matters are working nicely," he pondered. "I'll get a chance to speak to Miss Julia and Mr. Arthur before night, or I'll know the reason why. I ain't a going to have the little puppet married to old Job Jefferson, not if I can help it; and if the old squire don't find himself out-managed, my name ain't Sam Higgins!" And Sam burst into a great laugh.

All day long Julia was busy in her own room, arranging sundry little details in her wardrobe; and when, in the evening, she kissed her father, sitting in his easy chair, with vigilant eyes following her every motion, she lingered as if she would also have implored a blessing.

"Papa," she said, softly, "I know I have often been an undutiful daughter to you, but indeed I love you! Will you always remember that?"

"Hey! what's up now?" demanded Mr. Glenn.

"Nothing, papa!" sobbed Julia; "only—only I feel nervous and strange to-night, and I think I shall retire early!"

Mr. Glenn looked at his watch after Julia had gone up-stairs; it was only seven, and he composed himself to a patient half-hour of waiting.

As Julia's soft step fell on the velvet grass of the lane, Sam Higgins issued from a deep mass of shadow, cast by giant laburnums.

"Miss Julia!"

"Why, Sam, is that you?"

"I've brought you a note from him. I'm just come from him. You'll see he has changed the place of meeting to the old rock."

Julia glanced hurriedly over the note.

"That's strange—but he knows best. Is all right, Sam?"

"Right as a bell, Miss Julia. The carriage waits for you at the cross-roads. Good-bye—and good-luck go with you!"

Julia glided away like a shadow.

"Now for it," said old Mr. Glenn, to himself. "In just about fifteen minutes the young folks will find that I was one too many for 'em. Job Jefferson ought to be very much obliged to me, I'm sure!"

And he trotted out into the clear June moonlight.

Miss Keturah had got very tired of waiting under the great, old beech-tree. It was decidedly damp there in the cold, chill light of Luna's beams; and, besides, she felt several premonitory symptoms ofague in her face, for which dew and night-breezes were not salutary. Her teeth chattered in her head, and not even reflecting on the coming interview could keep her nose from turning blue.

Suddenly there was a rustling among the branches of the undergrowth, and old Mr. Glenn bounced abruptly into the clearing. He saw a shawled female figure, and rushed towards it.

"Expecting to meet your lover, eh, miss? Won't I do as well?" he ejaculated triumphantly, seizing what he imagined to be his daughter's arm!

"Lover!" squeaked Miss Keturah, undecided whether it was best to fight or faint. Mr. Glenn dropped her arm, as if it had been some noisome reptile.

"Hallo! it's the old maid!" he exclaimed, retreating a step or two in dismay. "What on earth are you doing here?"

"No more an old maid than you are!" said Miss Keturah, tossing her head till the curls quivered again.

"And am I not here by your own appointment?"

"Where's my daughter?" uttered Mr. Glenn, staring wildly around him.

"I don't know, or care," sobbed Miss Keturah. "It's a shame, so it is, when you yourself agreed to meet me—"

"I agreed to meet you, my worthy old soul? Are you insane? You are the last person in the world I care about meeting!"

This was too much. Miss Keturah uttered a shrill shriek, and went into hysterics upon Mr. Glenn's shoulders.

"Don't! What are you doing? Don't, my good creature! How do you expect me to hold you when you struggle so? Good Jupiter! what will become of me!" shouted the desperate old gentleman, suddenly letting Miss Keturah roll like a log to the ground, and fairly taking refuge in ignominious flight.

He rushed straight home, tumbled over Sam at the door, and never rested until he was locked and double-locked in his own room.

There was a soft little tap at his door.

"Who's there?" he shouted, his hair standing on end with vague horror lest Miss Keturah had come to take possession of him by storm.

"It is I, papa—Julia!"

He opened the door. She stood there, blushing like a sweet pea, her little hand resting on the arm of a tall young man beside her.

"Papa, I have come to tell you that I'm married to Arthur Latimer."

"Are you?" said Mr. Glenn, altogether past astonishment. In fact, nothing could surprise him now.

"You will forgive our stealing this march on you, sir?" said Arthur, gaily.

"I'll forgive anything!" ejaculated the old gentleman, "if you will protect me from that Miss Jones next door!"

And he recounted his adventures in a spirit of meekness truly edifying to behold.

The next morning, at breakfast, Sam reported that Miss Keturah Jones had become disgusted with the neighbourhood, and was removing her goods and chattels as fast as a horse and cart could take them away.

Thus were blighted the hopes of two mature individuals—Job Jefferson, Esquire, and Miss Keturah Jones!

A. R.



[PERCIVAL AND STACEY DISCOVER BEAUTIES AMONG THE RUINS.]

VIOLETTA.

By PERCY B. ST. JOHN,

Author of "Quadroon," "Blythe Hall," "Photographs of the Heart," &c., &c.

CHAPTER XXVII.

Know ye the land where the cypress and myrtle
Are emblems of deeds that are done in their clime?
Where the rage of the vulture, the love of the turtle,
Now melt into sorrow, now madden to crime?

Know ye the land of the cedar and vine,
Where the flowers ever blossom, the beams ever shine;
Where the light wings of Zephyr, oppress'd with perfume,
Wax faint o'er the gardens of Gill in her bloom;
Where the citron and olive are fairest of fruit,
And the voice of the nightingale never is mute;
Where the tints of the earth and the hues of the sky,
In colour, though varied, in beauty may vie;
And the purple of ocean is deepest in dye;
Where the virgins are soft as the roses they twine,
And all, save the spirit of men, is divine?
'Tis the clime of the East; 'tis the land of the sun;
Can he smile on such deeds as his children have done?
Oh! wild as the accents of lovers' farewell,
Are the hearts which they bear, and the tales which they tell.

Byron.

We have said their eyes fell on a vision of beauty.
What can, indeed, be more beautiful than the charms
of woman, heightened by all the accidents of time and
place?

The temple showed but little of its former loveliness and splendour. A few upright, several broken columns, ~~were~~ all that remained of what once had been a rich ~~men~~ of the arts and taste of ancient Greece; but the whole scene was bathed in light, and was viewed beneath a sky and atmosphere which breathed of love and beauty.

'Tis climate that undoubtedly influences, to a great degree, our ideas of the beautiful; a hideous Hindoo pagoda would often look more picturesque flooded by a golden sun, than a Greek temple on a bleak November day, on Albion's chalky shores.

Everywhere the two women, who had attracted the attention of our hero and his friend, would have been accounted lovely, so much does nature outdo art.

One was past what is usually allowed to youth—so much might have been seen on a very close examination; but still it would have been difficult to say on which side of thirty she really was.

The inference was that she was younger.

Tall, with dark eyes and hair, there was a rich voluptuous embonpoint of figure, set off by the picturesque costume of the isles of Greece. Her face was of the brunette complexion, her teeth dazzlingly white, while her almond-shaped eyes shaded, but not concealed, by long eyelashes, floated in a bath of light.

Her teeth were white as—what shall we say, save pearls?

Her air was pensive and thoughtful, as with a strange expression she gazed at the fair girl by her side.

With a tunic and leggings of blue and gold, an embroidered jacket that well displayed her shape, and with a head-dress of flowers and ribbons, she looked one of those fairies who flit by gaslight upon the stage for the amusement of their fellow-creatures; save that in eyes, lips, cheeks, there was an air of candour and innocence which belied the resemblance to any one, whose whole existence was a dream and an unreality.

Bright and glorious were those blue orbs of light, which now were fixed with earnest gaze upon the landscape before which she was sketching.

Rich and golden were those fair ringlets that, cast back in wanton merriment, fell over her alabaster neck in clusters of sunshine.

Small and beautifully arched was that mouth, all smiles and dimples at the progress she was making in her drawing.

Delicate and exquisitely shaped was that nose, with its little—the very faintest—arch proclaiming her pride of character.

Such tiny hands and feet, belonged surely only to fairy-land.

But hush ye winds and waves, be still all animated nature, for they are about to speak, and the two youths, forgetting that they are eaves-droppers, prepare to listen.

"Ada, sweetest," said the elder lady, speaking in the purest Italian, to the great delight of both youths who were excellent adepts in this tongue. "Lay down thy pencil, surely thou hast wearied those bright eyes of thine long enough."

"Yet a little while; I would rub-in that blue sky," said the girl; she was not more than fifteen.

"Ah child," replied the other, laughing, yet sad, "when will you learn to despise so trifling an amusement?"

"Never."

"But why, child?"

"Because mother, 'tis a part and parcel of that beauty, which is my worship. Poetry, painting, flowers you know are my passions, they people my world with light and life. When I read the stirring or melting verses of beautiful Italy, I appear wafted on balmy waves of song, to a paradise where no care, or fear, or sorrow can ever reach; when I paint I forget the outward world, that we are poor and oppressed, and that such a thing as hateful man has ever existed."

"It would be well, child, if you never forgot that sentence; yes, as long as man shall be really hateful to you, you may be happy; but once forget my salutary

warnings and art has no torture so refined, as you will suffer in your intercourse with man."

"And yet," said Ada, thoughtfully, "I cannot think all men so evil."

"Why?" cried the other, sternly.

"Because they are sometimes so very beautiful," replied Ada, simply, "and that which is beautiful, surely cannot be bad."

"Child!" said the elder woman, in a tone of such terrible and fierce energy, the young men's hearts leapt within them, "have you not heard of those bright apples, which without are all brightness, their roseate hue tempting the eye and appetite, but once laid open, their interior is ashes; such is man. The more fair and specious to the eye, the more evil in reality. Cunning and oily as the serpent, ferocious and remorseless as the tiger; patient in evil as the most rapacious bird of prey, man knows no mercy. His ambition is to deceive, destroy, betray. Shun him as you would a vampire."

She walked up and down as she spoke, her eyes flashing, her cheeks burning, and her whole mien that of some outraged priestess of Vesta, delivering her oracle to the wondering people.

Ada listened with a slightly heightened colour, with parted lips, and a bosom that rose and fell with emotion beneath its frail barrier of gauze and gold.

"If all men were like Hussein Pasha, who wanted to buy me, I could understand you, mother, but surely there are others not quite so evil?" urged Ada.

"That man behaved according to the customs of his race and religion," said the elder lady; "he would have added another flower to his garden by open purchase—to fade and wither ere the week was out, others would win you by wiles and by deceit, to neglect you the same. Pretend to love you—"

"Love!" mused Ada, to herself, scarce noticing the other's bent brow and flashing eyes, "tis a sweet word, and when I think of it my heart leaps as with delight. Mother, what is love?"

"The poison of a woman's life. Like you, I sighed for love—to my innocent heart it conveyed but images of happy days and years spent in the society of one adored and beloved being—"

How Ada's blue eyes dilated as she heard her own whispered thoughts emanating from the lips of another—thoughts she had driven back to the very depths of her bosom as sacrilegious and evil.

"Of one who would make it the business of his life to smooth our way—one with whom to travel the road of existence amidst one delicious dream of happiness. Such was my vision—yours—every woman's; and I, you, every woman was, is, or is to be, deceived."

John had heard all this, fascinated, bewildered, his

bosom alternately burning with indignation, or lit up by admiration and emotion new to his soul. At length, however, he faintly became aware that he had no more right to be there than the unfortunate youth who was so severely punished for humiliating Diana and her nymphs at the bath.

Catching hold of Harry Stacey's hand, he gently drew him away, fortunately without disturbing the rather agitated damsels.

"How beautiful!" cried Harry.

"Anglo—lovely! but, Harry I am not going to leave them thus. I will speak to that fair girl. There is a mystery about her; she is no Greek or Italian, I will swear. Let us walk boldly up—"

"But that Witch of Endor, Grecian Pythonesse, or Bengal tigress—what shall we do with her?" said Harry.

"That's your affair."

"Mine!" cried Lieutenant Stacey in a tone of ludicrous alarm.

"Yes, yours. I know you have the coolness of an Englishman, the vivacity of a Frenchman, and the impudence of a down-easter; so bairn her once when I have my say with the younger one."

"It's all very well," replied the other, laughing, "but suppose we reverse the order of things—suppose you board the frigate while I take the little yacht in tow."

"Harry, let us not waste our precious time in a vain dispute. Something tells me I am on the verge of great things. I have read my destiny in the eyes of that little siren—laugh me to scorn if you will—but I have fallen hopelessly in love in five minutes—"

"With a Greek pirate's daughter—who knows?" said Stacey, laughing.

"Or cares," replied John.

It was indeed true. One glance at those bright orbs, one smile of those soft lips, something in her form of expression, which perhaps no other man in the world would even have seen—had won round his heart with magic influence—and John loved to distinction, or thought he did, the little girl in the fantastic garb, who sat unconscious of his presence on the marble column of a Grecian temple.

Stacey made no reply; he was neither so romantic nor excitable as John, but he had too much sincere friendship for the young man, to contradict him in his present mood.

He followed then in his track, turned the ruins, and came suddenly upon the ladies on the other side.

Ada gave a pretty little shriek of surprise and alarm, while the elder lady hastily faced the unwelcome intruders.

John took off his hat, and in his most dulcet tones begged they would excuse the intrusion, but being travellers in search of the picturesque, they did not like to pass the ruins without a visit, even though they disturbed the fair temporary inhabitants of the temple.

"Young—handsome—cunning, and seductive in voice," muttered the elder lady in reply.

"If no secret, may I venture to look at the young lady's drawing?" said John, as cap in hand he advanced towards Ada, whose eyes were fixed upon the ground, but whose ears drank in greedily every word.

"At the same time, madam," said Stacey, "may I ask you for information as to the real character of this venerable and interesting monument of an age that is gone?"

"By your garb you should be English officers—as English officers you should be gentlemen," replied the elder lady, coldly. "Even your code of morals prohibits your insulting women, when alone and unprotected."

"Insult!" said our hero, turning round with flashing eyes and erect mien, "insult a woman—no man would dare do that in the presence of John Percival and live."

For a moment the elder woman stood looking coldly at him, as if she were cut from stone; her eyes had the magnetic glare of the serpent, her cheek was pale, her lips compressed; then as if yielding gracefully to one of the exigencies of the most polished and hollow society, she allowed her features to relax into a smile.

"Be it so—gentlemen. I must believe you. But our time is up. If you have seen enough of the ruins—we shall be glad of your escort back to the poor house we call our own."

Ada looked up, amazed, but radiant with smiles, John himself looked astounded, but instantly recovering himself, offered his arm to Ada.

The beautiful girl blushed deeply, and looked towards the elder female.

"Take it," said she in a sarcastic tone, "tis the free custom of his nation. I will lead the way with this gentleman."

And she took the arm of Stacey, who was himself not only bewildered, but puzzled. After a moment's reflection he came to the conclusion that woman was sickle, and casting off from his remembrance all the severe things she had said of his sex, exerted himself in his off-hand way to be polite and attentive.

His companion was graciously pleased to accept his

attentions, and did not once look back to where John and Ada lingered by the way.

Whatever the original country of Ada, she had lived so long amongst barbarians and savages—Turks and Turkish subjects—that the sight of the fair men of a northern climate, especially of a handsome young man, could not but produce considerable emotion in the heart of one so young, so pure, so innocent.

It may therefore be readily credited, that our hero had but little opportunity of judging the mental qualities or power of conversation of the young lady during that brief walk.

But he cared but little. He had her on his arm, he could gaze sideways at her lovely face, she was listening to his words with marked attention, and would a lover in the first flush of youthful passion, desire more?

Young men should never be hasty to condemn the fair objects of their hopes and fears, as frivolous or wanting in mind, because in the early stages of an attachment, they rarely find them able to carry on a sustained conversation, on poetry, books, Shakespeare or the musical glasses.

Women scarcely ever talk logically and seriously with men, unless totally indifferent or until time has so familiarized them to the object of their affection that he is looked upon as a brother, or almost a husband.

Be proud then, young men, when blushing misses of eighteen look down upon the ground, shamer forth indistinct responses, confound Maria with Mario, or answer you upon some wholly different topic than that on which you address them.

Relly upon it you have made an impression, unless indeed, the really favoured swain be present flirting with another damsel. But your own wit will enable you to detect the difference by the furtive glances of her eye.

John spoke with all the rapture of youth, of his profession, his travels, the beauteous landscapes and scenes he had passed through, and above all of his delight to have visited Candia.

To all his ecstacies Ada answered with a bow and a smile.

Conversing thus, the way seemed short, though in reality they had walked nearly two miles, when they halted before a small villa of elegant appearance.

The elder lady turned gracefully round to where our hero stood.

"If our poor wine and fruit would afford any refreshment to the gentlemen," she said, "they were welcome to enter."

Ada did not wait their reply, but tripped in at the open gate of the garden ere John could speak.

"Madam, if our visit be not an intrusion, we shall, I am sure, be proud to accept your kind hospitality. I must, however, seek our guide—"

"Yonder he comes; enter. Had your visit been unwelcome, I should not have invited you. Fate! fate! fate!"

These last words were muttered to herself as she strode into the house.

John, however, heard them, and mentally came to the conclusion that the extraordinary female before him was affected in her wits.

He was, however, too delighted at anything which brought him into contact with the young girl who had taken his heart so much by surprise, to quarrel with the means.

Love at first sight is rarely believed in, because circumstances generally arise to avert its progress. We may never see the object again.

But how many of us are there who can look back to the days of our youth, and not remember some bright face, some laughing eye or rosy lips, that struck, as it were, an electric chord within us, eyes—face, and lips which haunted us long after in our dreams—a sudden liking or fancy, which adverse circumstances alone prevented from ripening into ardent passion.

We doubt, if memory were not treacherous—that an exception is to be found—except where the heart is utterly callous, and insensible to tender emotions.

When Ada reached her chamber, she cast herself on a couch in such a confusion of mind as is only known to the young, when the heart begins to beat for the first time to the siren voice of young love.

A summons from her mother, however, soon roused her, and after a hasty attention to the toilette, she descended to join the party.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

There is a temple in ruin stands,
Fashion'd by long forgotten hands;
Two or three columns, and many a stone,
Made all in granite, with grass o'ergrown:
Out upon Time! it will leave no more
Of the things to come than the things before:
Out upon Time! who for ever will leave
But enough of the past for the future to grieve
Or that which has been, and o'er that which must be:
What we have seen, our sons shall see:
Remnants of things that have passed away,
Fragments of stone, reared by creatures of clay!

The room into which the two heroes of this romantic adventure were ushered, was of moderate di-

mensions, and to their great surprise was, as far as was consistent with the climate, furnished in the English style.

The presence of a harp, piano, and a pile of music at once excited their attention, though both feigned to be wholly occupied by the voice of their beautiful, but mysterious hostess.

"Now, gentlemen, be seated, while I give orders for your wants to be attended to, as well as your guide."

"With these words she vanished.

"I say, Jack!" observed Stacy, "all this is confoundedly mysterious."

"Very!" replied John.

"What do you make of it?" continued the other.

"Nothing, but that she is the most beautiful and divine of human creatures—"

"Which?"

"Why the girl to be sure. Charles—its no use disguising the master, I am over head and ears in love with this girl—she must, she shall be mine."

"Young man," said the stern, sarcastic voice of their hostess—as she stepped in between them and clutched his hand—what means this audacious threat—imp of an infernal brood, speak—who and what are you—and what is your fell purpose here?"

She spoke in English—and both stood aghast with surprise and vexation.

"Madam," said John, recovering himself by an energetic effort, "I have said nothing but what is honourable. I have told you my name is John Percival, only son of the late Sir John Percival Bart., and heir to his title and estates, now held by my most wicked uncle Sir Reginald."

Stacy was here as open-mouthed in his expression of astonishment as the lady on hearing Philip Darel, as he was called—so named, at the suggestion of Captain Murray—he, however, had no time to speak.

"Sir, I know the world, and have reason to look with suspicion on these mysterious passions; my daughter is about to join us. Have I your word, as a gentleman, that not one hint of your fatal passion shall be given without my consent?"

"You may withhold it for ever," said John, earnestly.

"No sir, your hot blood shall not even wait long; but I must have proof of your assertions."

"You shall hear my story."

"My God," she muttered to herself, "if it could be true."

At this moment Ada entered, followed by a genuine Grecian handmaiden—if any genuine Greeks do exist—with a tray of delicious fruits, bread and wine, the fragrant and wholesome meal of warm countries.

John hastened to hand the girl to a seat, with an air of such grave politeness, the young girl felt quite awed, while the elder lady bit her lip to check an incipient smile.

"Ada my love," she said in English, "you know my partiality to England and everything English. This gentleman is about to tell us his history. This will amuse you, and interest me. Speak in English, sir; we are mysterious people and understand most modern languages."

John bowed, and although more and more surprised every moment at what he heard and saw, drank one glass of wine and commenced his narrative.

It was curious to note the different manner in which the tale was received. The elder lady was chiefly struck by the parts which had reference to the villainy of his oppressors, while Ada, though terrified enough at all this, could scarcely restrain her tears, while listening to the record of his sufferings and the devotion and fidelity of Julius or Judith. When he had concluded she heaved a long sigh and seemed relieved as if from a nightmare.

"Tis a strange tale, but one that bears truth stamped on its every word," said the elder lady. "Still, the wiles of man are many, and why should I believe you more than another. How soon are you of age?"

"In five months," replied John.

"Tis well," said the lady, abruptly. "And now that you have refreshed yourselves and rested after your journey, I must bid you a long farewell. Forget the way to this house, where you have only been received as wayfarers, and more out of curiosity than anything else. No remonstrances!"

"But, madam—"

"Well?"

"Your promise!"

"I have not forgotten it;—keep yours as faithfully. You are about to return to England—go; prove your story, and ere many days you will hear from us. My time is up here; you see, gentlemen, before you an unavenged and injured woman—one who lives but in the hope of vengeance. I shall be in England before you."

"But, madam, your name—a clue by which to find you," urged John.

"I shall want no finding."

"But, mother—"

"Silence, girl; not a word, or you never meet more,

I have been strangely unmindful of my vows to let man enter here. Gentlemen, it will be all in vain to urge me," she said, rising with flashing eyes and pointing to the door, "or you will rouse that within me that will make your hearts quake to hear!"

She was terrible in her anger now—the manifest interest taken by the gentle Ada in the stranger was too bitter a draught for her to swallow. She was almost choked with passion, which, however, fell at once as she saw the sorrowful, mournful, but most respectful manner in which the young man took leave of the fair girl.

"I shall remember this day, madam," he said, significantly; "when we meet in England I shall remind you of it."

"Do so," replied the other, coldly.

And with these words they parted.

"Why, mamma, are you so harsh to that young man?" said Ada, timidly, as soon as the door had closed behind them.

"Ask me nothing, girl. Is he not a man? Has not the foul poison entered your soul already? Do you not think of him, the acquaintance of an hour, more than of her who has nursed you for years?"

"Nay," said Ada, naively, "I do think I should like him if I saw much of him; but I should never love him as I do you!"

"Child," cried the other, forgetting the dangerous character of her own discourse, "you know not what you say. Did that man have time to wheedle you with his serpent tongue, I—I should be forgotten as if I had never lived. Love is as that little grain of seed falling into rich soil, which rises first as a tiny plant scarce worth the plucking out, but which presently creeping right and left, invades the whole garden, and not all the exertions of the gardener can extirpate it. Rooted out of one place it rises in another, creeps into crevices, and unless the whole bed be dug up invades the place for years. Not love him as you do me! why, child, in a week I should very little in your esteem, in a month I should be forgotten. What are fathers, mothers, brothers, sisters, when the fate of our lives is near us?"

To this impassioned and very indiscreet harangue, Ada replied with heaving bosom.

"If heaven made love so powerful, it must be good; but I should never forget you, nor any one who had ever been kind to me. But are we really going to England?"

"We are. I had not meant to visit that country so soon, but fate urges me on, we must go. But now Ada, you must not be exposed to meet this young man again until the time comes when it shall be good. He is impetuous and fearless, his eyes speak passion; I will place therefore a barrier between you. This night you sleep at nurse's, my no denial. I have business, and cannot be watchful. It must be."

Ada bowed her head, she knew the other's stern will and determination, and attempted not to resist. She even retired to a room, where she could prepare some little necessaries for her journey, which was only to the outskirts of the town to which John and Stacey had returned in company with their guide.

John and his friend were both silent for a few moments.

"Well Ned," said our hero in a low and rather desponding voice, "what think you of all this?"

"That I never in my life came across such a terciman;" replied Stacey.

"She is a passionate woman, but I suspect has some secret reasons we cannot fathom. What think you of Ada?"

"The young lady is very beautiful," said the young lieutenant drily.

"What mean you?" asked the lover passionately.

"The young lady appeared to me to have her eyes but for one person; your humble servant therefore is unable to give judgment in the case," replied Stacey.

John smiled. His secret wishes, we may at once say hopes, were flattered by the words of his companion; who, however, not being in love speedily changed the conversation to one more personal to John, and reproached him with having been so incautious in the narrative of his personal adventures as to give his real name.

"I could not help it," he said, passionately, "before that girl I could not appear in false colours. It was more than I could do to keep my secret."

"Which is no secret now," said Stacey, drily.

"Edwin, you are wrong; there is truth in both. Her temper has been soured by trials, but I could swear to the honour of both the mother and her peerless daughter."

"That is a matter of opinion which I decline to discuss," continued the other drily, "but if those women don't bring you into trouble, then I'm a Dutchman."

John vouchsafed no reply. He did not wish to quarrel with Stacey, but he was too angry to address him in a friendly tone.

In this mood they reached the city, and went to their hotel, where they found the dinner they had previously ordered awaiting them.

After dinner, tired and exhausted, Stacey lay down and fell asleep. John, however, was in no mood for

slumber, but sailed forth in company with a guide, a lad from whom, however, he suddenly separated himself, sending him home with some idle message to Stacey.

He then ran up a narrow street, and disappeared.

Early next morning, the climate being inimical to late hours, the two young men rose with the intention, if not recalled by a signal from the ship, to start on another excursion to a distant part of the island.

To their astonishment they learned that the captain, after dining with the governor, had returned to the very hotel in which they were staying, to sleep.

They determined to pay their respects to their superior officer, by sending up a message, when a clamour was heard without, the door was burst open and in rushed the lady they had seen before, accompanied by a gentleman in European dress, and several servants.

Outside the door was a Turkish guard.

"What means this intrusion?" began John.

"Villain! my child! my child! what have you done with her?" said the lady passionately.

"Madam," said John, "be calm; what do you mean? Why this armed force, and who is this gentleman?"

"I am the British consul, sir," replied the gentleman severely, "and I came to accompany this lady in her search for her lost child."

"My Ada! my darling! my life!" said the other wildly.

"Be calm, madam," exclaimed John, "or I shall go distracted. I solemnly declare I know nothing of your daughter, but if harm has come to her, will give my life to restore her to you."

"What is all this?" said the stern voice of Captain Charles Murray, entering the room in full dress, but with his sword in his hand.

The English consul bowed, and the lady would have spoken, but John hurriedly advanced and told his story, to which the captain listened with the most profound gravity.

"And now what is the charge against you?" said the captain.

"Of last night inducing the misguided girl to elope," cried the lady.

"John," said Charles Murray, "did you see the girl last night, after you left the villa?"

"I did," replied John, while his face was alternately red and white.

"You hear him?" cried the lady, whose eyes now flashed fire.

The consul looked puzzled, and Edward Stacey rubbed his eyes to convince himself that he was awake.

"Under what circumstances?" said the captain, coldly.

"I saw her enter the door of a small house, and go out a few minutes after to a well for a pitcher of water. I could not resist the impulse to speak once again, and so I joined her. She appeared very surprised, and could scarcely speak. I should have pressed for a longer interview; but I saw several truculent-looking Turkish soldiers watching us, so advised her to re-enter the house. On my soul, I have never seen her since!"

"Young man," cried the lady, passionately, "and this you swear?"

"I do."

"Then is she lost indeed, for she is in the harem of Hussein Pasha, the governor."

"Merciful heavens!" cried John.

"Madam," said the English consul, coldly—he was not an Englishman—"you should be careful how you prefer charges against English gentlemen. I accompanied you here out of mere courtesy, for you have no claim on me, not being a British subject."

"But she is," gasped the lady.

"Prove it!" cried Charles Murray, striking his sword against the ground, "and pasha or sultan, he shall give up the girl."

"If once in his harem, it will be difficult," said the English consul, with a shrug.

"It shall be!" replied the naval officer, coldly, "my mission is against pirates, and this is the worst piracy of all. Speak, madam!"

"To you alone must my secret be told," said the lady, in a hollow tone; "tis a terrible revelation, but it must be made."

"May I have the honour of showing you to a room," said the captain.

"Tis but a word; here, in the entrance of the window, will do. My proof is very simple."

The captain bowed, and led her where she suggested. Their backs were both turned; but at the first word all noticed that the captain started back as if with horror; he then advanced and took the lady's hand, listening to her words with deep attention.

Suddenly he turned round. His face was flushed, his eyes like burning coals, his whole man excited in the extreme.

"The girl is a British subject, and as such, entitled to the protection of every Englishman!" he cried. "By Heavens! if Hussein Pasha has touched the hair of her head, I will blow his palace about his ears, if I am cashiered for it! Gentlemen, follow me."

"But, captain," cried the consul of the English—not the English consul—"we have no proofs—not a tittle of evidence to go upon."

"True!" cried the captain, striking his forehead with his hand; "what is to be done?"

"Sir!" said John, respectfully, "might I be allowed to speak?"

"Certainly, sir!" replied the captain.

"Do you, sir, the British consul, and the lady visit the Pasha in state, and lay your complaint. In the mean time, pray give to myself and Stacey, unlimited leave of absence, and we will endeavour to find that evidence which is wanting."

There was a strange fire in the eyes of John as he spoke.

"Boy! you will do nothing rash, nothing to endanger a life precious on many accounts?" said the senior officer.

"I will be careful."

"Then go, boys, and my blessing with you," said the captain, in a voice of much emotion.

"What are you about to do?" asked the lady, in a whisper.

John told her.

"Art so bold!" she answered in the same tone.

"My life on her liberty!" said John.

"Tis destiny!" muttered the strange guardian of Ada; "but if it is so, it must be so. Take this ring, go to Riga Bey, and he will give you directions which may aid you in the undertaking which you have decided on. Heaven bless you! and forgive me my suspicions."

"Be careful, my boy," said Murray, whose emotions were something extraordinary.

John wrung his hands, and hastily left the room in company with Stacey.

(To be continued.)

AN ACT OF PARLIAMENT has just been printed to extend and make compulsory vaccination in Ireland. All children born after the 1st of January next are to be vaccinated, under penalties.

THE COMING COURT-MARTIAL.—We understand that the mode of proceeding in the court-martial about to be held on Lieutenant-Colonel Crawley for the alleged illegal imprisonment resulting in the death of Sergeant-Major Liley has been fully arranged by the authorities, and that the intention is to keep the inquiry within the narrowest possible compass. We are informed that the only question raised will be whether or not the subaltern officer exceeded his instructions in the mode of placing the sentry. A strong point in Lieutenant-Colonel Crawley's defence will be, we have reason to believe, to throw the blame of the sergeant-major's death upon Dr. Turnbull, who, it is alleged, made no report to his commanding officer as to the state of prisoner's health. We have full confidence that the parties interested will have a satisfactory answer to these allegations; but "forewarned is forearmed;" it is but right that they should know in time the sort of case against which they will have to contend. As the court-martial upon Corporal Blake will form an important feature in this inquiry, it is a fortunate fact that the soldier who was orderly-room clerk of the Inniskilling Dragoons during its progress is now in England, having purchased his discharge, and is ready to be produced as a witness upon the trial.

BRITISH SNAILS IN THEIR HOUSES.—We will now, by the aid of Mr. Reeve's text, examine a few of the most remarkable and interesting of our molluscs. Commencing with the family of *Limacidae*, in which the respiratory and visceral organs are incorporated with the main contractile mass of the body, and the shell is either wanting or is rudimentary, we find the *Arion ater*, or black arion. This majestic, richly-diapered slug is easily recognized by its large dimensions. It excavates a kind of tunnel, in which it generally passes the day, coming out at night to feed. Though a vegetarian by nature, the arion is not averse to a succulent earth-worm. He is indeed, judging by his aldermanic proportions, a very gastronomer among molluscs, and is evident by an interesting and authentic narrative of a widow in Kent supporting herself and family during a winter on these slugs. Her mode of proceeding was to drop the slugs into boiling water, and then deposit them with salt in a cask. She and her children had thus prepared two casks full of this food, and so well did it suit them that they were fatter and more rosy than any other labourer's family in the parish. This and other slugs are also eaten on the Continent, being sometimes made into slug soup, and sometimes stewed in water and eaten with milk and savoury seasoning. A remarkable variety of this species is the ash slug, which is spitted like a leopard, and has, the curious property of mucus-spinning. Mr. Reeve states that he saw one descend in a room by a thread of mucus which it had spun from a mantelpiece into the fender, and that the time spent in the operation was about five minutes.

HAZELTON HALL.

CHAPTER I.

It was nearly sunset when the carriage, containing Adelaide Wynne rolled up the broad avenue to Hazelton Hall, the residence of Guy Hazelton, her guardian.

The death of Miss Wynne's father left her to a desolate orphanage, with only a small fortune, and no near relatives.

Mr. Wynne put confidence in Guy Hazelton, more because he had intimately known his father, than from any personal acquaintance with the young man himself.

The Hazeltons were fiery-blooded—of a proud, old family, whose loves and hatreds were lasting as their lives. But their honour was unsullied; and to this last of the line, Mr. Wynne, in dying, felt no hesitation in consigning his daughter.

As the carriage turned an angle of the grounds, and a break in the shrubbery allowed the hall to be more distinctly visible, Adelaide leaned from the window to get the first view of her new home. The soft, red, sunset light streamed over her lifted face, giving it a bloom not its own, and gilding her dark brown hair with faint suggestions of gold. Her face was not a strictly beautiful one—it was hardly fair and rosy enough for that—but it was one of those faces that kindle and glow with every passing emotion. Her great, dark eyes were slumberous now; the red lips were at rest with a serious sadness—but you knew there would be times when this face would be to some one the sole life, and beauty, and inspiration, out of heaven.

Mr. Hazelton came down the steps to meet her. A dark, handsome man, with a tall, finely-moulded figure, and the air of one born to be obeyed. But the first sight of his ward made him reverentially respectful, if not tender. Perhaps he knew how very desolate she must be feeling; and for that his heart pitied her. He lifted her from the carriage with some gentle words of welcome, and leading her into the house, consigned her to the care of his aunt, Mrs. Marlowe, who had charge of his household.

Fatigued with her journey, Adelaide did not come down to tea, but in the morning she was walking in the garden, when Mr. Hazelton joined her, and they went over the grounds together. In the half-hour before breakfast, Mr. Hazelton made himself acquainted with Miss Wynne's simple history. Her mother had died a number of years previous, in the south of France. She herself had been educated in Paris, and had travelled through southern Europe, and some portions of Asia. Mr. Wynne had been an amateur landscape painter, and in the study of his favourite art, or pastime—call it which you will—had travelled extensively. As he felt himself approaching life's termination, he longed for the familiar air of home once more, and three months before his death he had landed in Dover. The old home of the Wynnes was only fifty miles distant from the sea-side residence of Mr. Hazelton; and thither the invalid had come—only to die there. His last effort was to indite his will, and also a letter to Guy Hazelton making him the guardian of Adelaide.

Mr. Hazelton had accepted the trust, expecting to find his ward a half-civilized hoyden, whom he should have great difficulty in keeping within bounds. Instead, he found a very lovable young lady, refined, intellectual, and retiring.

Her education had been carefully attended to; it only remained for her guardian to recommend a suitable course of reading. The library at the hall was rich in ancient and modern lore, and the rarely cultivated mind of Mr. Hazelton took peculiar delight in the avidity with which Adelaide seized upon his favourite authors. After a little while it grew to be a regular routine for these two to spend a couple of hours every afternoon in the library, reading and discussing the merits of some favourite author.

Miss Wynne awoke a new interest in the heart of her guardian. Emotions he thought left for ever behind him with his lost youth, again swept over him; in feeling, he was once more the impassioned, enthusiastic boy. Everything had for him an unwonted charm. The long rides over the smooth beach, by the side of the solemn sea, filled him with a kind of deep quiet joy, because she was with him. The broad reaches of blue hills stretching away to the sunset, toward which they rode, wore for him a new significance. His spirits rose at the smell of the red clover, and his stormy eyes softened at sight of the yellow crowfoot on the rank, damp meadows. And why? He did not ask the question; he only knew that it might be asked. He was content with what life was giving him.

Early in September, there came a letter to the master of the hall, from Randolph Lee, a college friend. Mr. Lee had just returned from a tour and wanted a little rest from the fashionable excess of the world. He was coming to the hall, if Mr. Hazelton would only invite him. He thought it was just the place for him to find peace in. By the sea-side, too; and no gay women to

fill it with vanity and satins. He fairly longed to set out.

Mr. Hazelton read the frank, boyish letter with a cloud on his brow. A year ago he would have rejoiced at the prospect of a visit from Lee; now, he wished that the letter had not come.

Common courtesy demanded from him a reply, and a tender of the hospitalities of the hall; and a week afterwards Mr. Lee arrived.

Randolph Lee was indisputably handsome. There could hardly be a stronger contrast than the personal appearance of Mr. Lee and that of his host. Mr. Hazelton was almost Italian in his style; Mr. Lee, purest Saxon.

He was social, frank, and easy in his manners to all save Adelaide. With her he was respectful and courteous, but never familiar—she held him at a distance. In their rides and walks she gave the preference to Mr. Hazelton; if she asked advice upon any girlish difficulty, she asked it of him. Mr. Lee was practically ignored.

Mr. Hazelton watched her closely; watched her with a strange, absorbing kind of anxiety. His heart would throb fiercely, and his eyes gleam with passion at her slightest touch; but he grew rigid and cold as steel when he saw that she blushed at the approach of Randolph Lee, and trembled at the sound of his voice. The old, arrogant blood of the Hazeltons was not dead in his veins; he, the last of the family, could love and hate as fiercely as the fiercest of them all.

Sometime after the Christmas holidays, a niece of Mrs. Marlowe's deceased husband arrived at the hall, on a visit of indefinite length. Ethel Villiers was of French extraction.

She was superbly beautiful. One who saw her once would remember her always. Description, were it ever so glowing, would fail to do her justice; it would not convey half an adequate idea of the simple magnificence of her rare beauty.

In detail—she had purplish black hair, and eyes of the same varying, uncertain colour, regular features, pale, pure complexion, a mouth "faulily faultless," and a form which the most fastidious sculptor could not have improved.

Her manner was reticent, cold, her admirers said; her accomplishments varied, as those of Frenchwomen usually are.

The arrival of Miss Villiers was the signal for the beginning of festivities among the families in the vicinity. Society there had only awaited the coming of their company.

Hazelton Hall was alive with company. Parties followed each other in quick succession; gaieties were innumerable. The grand old rooms rang night and day with laughter, song, and music.

Christmas passed in mirth and festivity, and at every gathering Ethel Villiers was the acknowledged belle. Her suitors were unnumbered. It seemed to be the fate of every man, over whom her influence fell, to love her; and she gave the preference to none. Her manner was cold and self-constrained to all; her cheek never flushed; her eye rarely brightened. She was a beautiful statue, and yet beneath this icy exterior burned a heart of living flame.

Early in the new year, Randolph Lee made his adieux and left the hall. Business called him to London, where he would be absent until spring. When he was once more at liberty, he would pay his respects to the fair family at the hall, he said, on his departure, and with light words, and smiles for all, he went away.

The winter passed as all winters do where people are young, and free, and happy.

In May, Randolph Lee returned for a few weeks' visit. From the moment of his coming, Mr. Hazelton, usually so cheerful and hospitable, grew sulken and almost saturnine, shutting himself up for hours together in the library, and avoiding his guests with singular unsociability.

One day in June, the party at the hall, and some half-dozen young people of the vicinity, set out on a party of pleasure. Just before they were to return home, a quick shower came up, and they were forced to take refuge in an old, dilapidated building which had once belonged to a ruined hostelry.

The shower proved to be a perfect storm. The wind roared, the thunder crashed incessantly, and the flashes of lightning blazed continually. The old building rocked wildly in the blast, the loose boards and timbers clattering at every fresh gust, and threatening the party with destruction.

A dead calm fell for a moment; the winds stopped, the rain ceased, and then a deafening explosion rent the air: a fierce flame of livid fire shot down a tall post of the building, the place was full of sulphurous smoke, and the splinters flew in every direction.

Adelaide rushed past Mr. Hazelton into the shelter of Randolph Lee's arms, and he held her there, smoothing her soft hair and whispering words of tenderness.

The tempest was over at last, and the sun came out, but the black shadow on the face of Guy Hazelton only grew deeper and fiercer. He strode home alone—Adelaide leaned on the arm of Mr. Lee.

That evening Mr. Hazelton met Adelaide in the

library. The forbidding frown had passed from his face, but his manner was stern, his countenance austere.

She would have left him, but he closed and locked the door.

"Adelaide," he said, "I wish to speak with you. Sit down."

He placed a chair for her, but she only rested her hand on the back and remained standing.

"Well, sir, I am listening."

"What I saw this afternoon, Miss Wynne, has forced upon me a most unwelcome conclusion. May I ask you a question?"

"You may."

"Do you love this Randolph Lee?"

A hot flush rose to her face; her dark eyes lit up with a kind of proud indignation.

"That is a question which I refuse to answer."

"Very well. I am just as much satisfied with that look in your eyes as though you had said before the whole world, 'Yes, I do love him!' And you have given your affections unasked, and you will meet with no return. Another and a fairer holds the place in his heart that you covet. Have you never seen him with Ethel Villiers?"

Adelaide grew pale. She remembered his apparent devotion to the haughty beauty, his studied indifference to herself—and she had betrayed herself to him, and he cared nothing for her. She covered her face with her hands, trembling with womanly shame.

Mr. Hazelton put her in a chair and stood behind her.

"Adelaide, my dear child, be calm. There is nothing done to compromise you, if you stop where you are. He will think you were only terrified, and flew to him for protection. I wished to warn you, that was all. Your own pride will be your safeguard. Be wise, and—good night."

He touched her hand with his lips, and left her alone.

Adelaide sank down on the carpet and wept bitterly. She saw all clearly now. She realized that from the very first she had been growing to hold Randolph Lee dearer—that every day had strengthened the sentiment, until now it filled her entire being. She had been cold to him because she loved him so. She feared by word or look to betray her secret, for he might have thought her unmaidenly. A woman must never reveal her feelings. She may die, but she must make no sign.

He had been always gently indifferent to her; politely courteous, as he would have been to any other woman—he was kind and polite even to the servant girls. It was his nature. Toward Miss Villiers his manner was different. He was her most devoted cavalier. He acceded to her slightest wish, laughed when she laughed, and grew grave when her beautiful face clouded.

True, Mr. Lee had held her tenderly to his breast when she had thrown herself there; he had spoken soft, sweet words to her while she lay there in half-defined fear; he had subsided into eloquent silence while walking home with her and when he left her for the night had pressed her hands in his and whispered, "God bless you, Adelaide!"

Perhaps he pitied her. *Pitied her!* She started up with hot cheeks and flashing eyes. She would be the object of no man's commiseration. Never! She, a Wynne, loving unsought! She wiped away her tears—her fierce, indignant scorn of herself dried up their fountain. She went to bed with burning eyes and a heart shut up to all sweet influences.

The next day no one was half so brilliant as Miss Wynne. She surpassed herself, and well-night took the sceptre of beauty from Ethel Villiers.

Those who had before thought her simply a pretty girl, now vowed she was magnificent; and Mr. Hazelton's dark face glowed as he marked her bewildering loveliness.

All the delicate attempts of Mr. Lee to approach her were repulsed with cool scorn, and at last he fled to for a fortnight.

Lee grew fretful and impatient; Hazelton was cool, calculating, and triumphant; Miss Villiers scolded her maid, gave Adelaide short answers, and alternately smiled and frowned on her admirers.

CHAPTER II.

One foggy morning, Mr. Hazelton was walking on the cliffs, a half-mile from the hall. Those cliffs were high, detached portions of rock—reaching one above another to the height of nearly a hundred feet—and hanging far over the sea.

Mr. Hazelton leaned on the topmost cliff and gazed down into the black depths below. An ashen-white hue crept over his face; he drew back hurriedly, and commenced pacing the dangerous path across the rocks.

"A curse on the old wild blood!" he muttered to himself, "a curse upon it! I had hoped that years of intermixing with gentler races would have its effect; but no, it is as fierce and hot in my veins as it was in those of my ancestor St. Pierre."

He held out his hand—looked at it.

"Strange, that a will of iron, like mine, is powerless over such a little bundle of nerves and muscles; strange, that when I look upon his fair face, and remember that she loves him, I am filled with an uncontrollable impulse to feel his life-blood hot upon my hands! At heart, I am a murderer! Strange and terrible power of passion. What is this little, frail girl—so fair and tender I could crush her soul out at a blow—what is she, that she should stir my whole nature into fearful revolution? What is she, that I should be willing to renounce my soul's salvation to feel her lips on mine, and hear her say, 'Guy Hazelton, I love you?'"

He strode wildly to and fro, with clenched hands and gloomy brow, and the dismal waters moaned on at his feet, fathoms below. A footstep crunched the dry moss at his side, and a hand was laid on his shoulder. A cheery voice ejaculated :

"Out for a walk, Hazelton? I didn't know you were romantically inclined before. But why do you look so black, if I may be allowed to inquire?"

Hazelton stepped back a pace, and glowered on Randolph Lee. The eyes of the two men met. The inmost heart of each leaped up to the surface. Each read the other's secret.

"Well," exclaimed Hazelton, "at last we understand each other. We both love the same woman."

"We do," said Lee, calmly.

"And what then?" demanded the other, fiercely.

"The one whom she loves will win her."

"That remains to be seen."

"I would sell my life for her. We have misunderstood each other long enough. This very morning I am going to her to learn my fate. If she does not care for me, I will go away where I shall never see her again; if she does, by Heavens I will never give her up. She shall be mine, and none other's."

He stood erect and firm on the very edge of the cliff, his handsome face flushed with his love, youth, and strong sense of manhood.

A cold, demoniacal chill passed over Guy Hazelton.

"You shall never marry her," he exclaimed, hoarsely; "I would kill her first."

"I defy you," said Lee, proudly. "If she loves me, I laugh at your power."

A terrible temptation laid its icy hold on Hazelton's soul. The veins in his forehead swelled into knotted, purple cords; the demon was in his soul, and his better nature failed to spring to the contest till all was over.

With one quick blow he sent Lee reeling over the cliff—down, down to the horrible depth below. There was a dull splash, a smothered gurgle, and the sea kept its dread secret well.

The frightful consciousness of what he had done rushed over Hazelton with overwhelming power. Ten thousand torments seized upon his wretched spirit. He turned and fled from the place, his face white as death, his wild eyes strained almost to bursting. When he reached the stables he flung himself on his fastest horse, and leaving word that urgent business called him away, he gave the animal the reins and was borne down the steep road like the wind. He rode till he grew weak, faint from the violent motion, and then he turned his horse homeward. He avoided the path of the cliffs with a shudder.

He joined his guests in the parlour, at length, outwardly calm, smiling, and genial. Ethel addressed him first on the dreaded subject. Her manner was strange; he wondered at it then—he wondered at it for a long time afterwards, but never guessed the reason.

"Have you seen Mr. Lee during your absence?"

"No; is he not here?"

"He is not, neither has he been here since morning. They have been anxious about him, but I supposed you might have met him, and caused him to join you."

"I have not met him. The last I saw of him he was on his way to the cliffs. He walks there a great deal, if you have observed. It is a dangerous locality. I must institute a search for him."

Adelaide asked no questions, but sat in a corner of the great sofa, pale as marble. Ethel toyed idly with her fan. Mr. Hazelton went out and sent off the servants to the cliffs. They were absent not more than half an hour; they brought with them a small piece of the coat of the missing man. They had found it clinging to a stunted thorn, a few feet below the edge of the cliff.

There was no longer any doubt. Lee had fallen over the cliff.

Adelaide heard the fatal testimony, saw the fragment of cloth, and went up to her chamber like one in a trance. All the night through—while they dragged at the foot of the cliff—she sat by her open window listening to the sullen beat of the waves and the hoarse orders of the fishermen, one to another.

Adelaide groaned. "It seemed so long to wait. For days afterwards Adelaide Wynne went about like a being not of this world—colourless, noiseless, and silent as a shadow."

She made no complaint, but for hours together she would sit out on the extreme edge of the bluff, gazing

down into the water which had closed so coldly and darkly over him.

Pride alone kept her up. Had she known that Randolph Lee loved her, she might, perhaps, have worn out her life in weeping over his untimely fate; but still believing herself uncared for, she could sorrow only in secret, and live on.

Ethel Villiers was changed, but why, no one guessed. She was fitfully brilliant at times—utterly sad at intervals; she gained colour and vivacity, and by turns was almost recklessly radiant.

One day, on going into the parlour, Ethel found Mr. Hazelton there alone. He had been reading, evidently—singular book enough one would have thought—an old judicial account of Conviction of Murder by Circumstantial Evidence. Perhaps he had wearied of the work, for he half- reclined in a large arm-chair, his head thrown back, and his eyes closed. The soft August breeze, laden to repletion with the scent of flowers and the songs of birds, floated in through the clematis vines over the window, and lifted his loose hair, but failed to arouse him. Ethel came noiselessly to his side. An expression of profound tenderness swept over her proud face, her cheeks grew crimson as the fuchsia-blossoms in her hair; she leaned forward and touched her lips to his forehead. Instantly his eyes opened, and he gazed at her in bewildered surprise. Her blushes, her confusion, betrayed her; the secret of her heart could be read in her face.

There was a slight accent of sarcasm in the tone of the gentleman's voice as he said :

"Thank you, Miss Villiers. Really, I had not before dreamed that I was a favourite."

She flushed and paled, rapidly; but she had advanced too far to go back. Her bosom heaved beneath its weight of creamy pearls, her white hands crushed fiercely against each other, her eyes ran over with passionate tenderness, and her rose-red lips just parted with the breath that came so fitfully through them. The slumberous opal light of the summer day fell around her in a mist of gold. Never, in all the course of her queenly life, had Ethel Villiers looked one-half so beautiful.

The bewildering charm of her presence influenced strangely her stern-faced companion. He reached out his arm and drew her towards him, down on the velvet-cushioned ottoman at his feet, where he could look into her soul through her eyes.

"Ethel," he said, "you are perfectly faultless. There could be no suggestion of improvement on your rare beauty. One with a face like yours should be worshipped with madness, to the end."

She looked up into his face. The words broke from her without the sanction of her will—passion conquered all considerations:

"Oh, Guy Hazelton, I love you! Deal tenderly with me, for my whole soul worships you!"

He put her away with almost rude hands, while his strong frame shook with some unwonted emotion.

"Ethel, I love another."

She rose to her feet pale as death, but wonderfully calm.

"Will you tell me her name?"

"No. I know something of your nature by the violence of my own. I would not trust even the pure name of her I love to your knowledge. The world is wide—you are beautiful—leave me alone, and win some one who will give his heart into your sole keeping."

"So you refuse my love?"

"I do. Every throb of my life belongs to another! I have staked my eternal welfare on that love."

She fixed her great purple-black eyes on him with a world of meaning lurking in their fathomless depths.

"You will lose," she said, slowly—"lose for all time—and for eternity! You may win her love, and go with her to the altar, but even there she will not be yours, for I will speak the words that shall have power to sunder you wider than heaven and hell lie apart!"

She turned and left the room. The next morning her trunks were packed, and the neighbourhood was inconsolable for the loss of Miss Ethel Villiers.

CHAPTER III

MR. HAZELTON'S whole life seemed devoted to the accomplishment of one aim—winning the love of Adelaide Wynne. But it was a vain trial. His words of passion fell upon deaf ears. She had no heart to give. She only asked to be left in peace.

But he would not give her up. He reasoned, argued, persuaded, entreated, until at last she consented. She would become his wife only in name; but if it would make him happier, she was willing to be added to his other chattels.

He was only too glad to make her his on any terms. He hoped that love would come after marriage. Such cases were frequent.

The preparations for the wedding went briskly forward. The *trousseau* was imported directly from Paris by order of the bridegroom elect; the old family jewels were re-set, and others purchased; and the stately

apartments of the hall were gorgeous in modern upholstery and carved furniture.

Adelaide's young lady friends went into ecstasies over the exquisite silks and laces and muslins, and envied her till she grew sick at heart of the vain show.

Meanwhile, strange rumours were afloat in the vicinity, particularly among the fishermen at the village just below the cliffs.

They said the cliffs were haunted. Lights were seen there on foggy mornings; and sometimes at dead of night, when the white, ghastly moon was yet high in the sky, the tall form of Randolph Lee was outlined against the purple heavens, standing on the very verge of the cliff, his dead, pale face turned seaward, his vacantly brilliant eye looking out over the lonesome swell of tossing billows.

Adelaide heard the story last of all. Heard it with a cold shudder, as if she felt even the chilly waves of his winding-sheet around her.

Mr. Hazelton grew ghastly as death when they told him the unlucky tale, and forbade its being again mentioned in his presence. But from that day all who noticed him saw that a terrible change was at work. His dark face assumed a wan, ashen hue, and its clear outline waxed sunken and wrinkled. His raven-black hair was thickly threaded with silver, and there was an unnatural gleam in his eye that could be born only from an unquiet soul. Towards Adelaide he was always passionately tender; he studied her every wish, and deferred to her slightest inclination with a touching grace. He seemed to be willing to lose his own identity in hers. Towards others, he was stern, cold, and taciturn. His slumbers were troubled, and he had his serving-man sleep in an alcove in his chamber.

The day fixed for the wedding drew nigh. It was the tenth of January.

The night before, Adelaide went to her chamber early, dismissed her maid, and throwing a shawl over her went out for a walk on the snow-covered terrace. It was her last night of girlhood—to-morrow she would be a wife. The wife of a man for whom she felt not a single spark of affection. It was strange that she looked forward to it with so much calmness. A year ago it would have driven her mad, the bare certainty of such a possibility; but then she had a living heart; now, it was dead within her!"

A slight rustle startled her, and looking up she saw at the further extremity of the terrace the face and form of Randolph Lee. The crystal moonlight fell unobstructed on his colourless countenance, revealing every feature with startling distinctness, and across the white forehead gleamed a purple scar reaching backward till it lost itself in the mass of soft, bright hair. She saw only his profile—his eyes, dark and lustreless, were turned to the fast setting moon.

A moment she stood transfixed, then took a step forward; but the apparition had vanished. The last ray of the moon silvered the spot where it had stood, shivered behind a black pine far away on the distant horizon, and then sank from view into the bosom of the western hills. All was darkness—a cold and dreary void.

Adelaide reached her chamber, she scarcely knew how, and managed to wear the long night away.

They said the bride looked pale. They would not have wondered if they had known that she had never closed her eyes in sleep the previous night. The snowy satin robes in which they arrayed her were not whiter than her cheeks, and her eyes had a kind of wistful, half-expectant look every time a door opened.

From Mr. Hazelton she unconsciously shrank, and he, finding his presence distasteful to her, kept aloof.

By ten o'clock the company began to arrive, and by the hour fixed for the performance of the ceremony the great drawing-rooms were filled to overflowing. The bridal train entered by the folding-doors from the private parlours, the bride in white satin and pearls, and crowned with orange flowers, the bridesmaids blushing and smiling in their white silks and hot-house red roses.

Mr. Hazelton was pale to ghastliness, and there was a nervous tremor in his manner quite unlike his usual haughty bearing. Adelaide, though colourless and cold, was self-possessed. Now that the hour had come, she did not tremble or dread. She had ceased to look forward. She put her icy hand in his. It was like touching ice and snow.

The company held their breaths. The clergyman began the solemn ritual. He proceeded to read that portion which charges any one knowing any reason why the services should not go on, to speak then, or henceforth hold their peace. He paused from habit when he had finished, for not once, perhaps, in a thousand times is that adjuration responded to.

There was a slight rustle in the outer hall, the door swung open, and a clear, treble voice broke the hushed silence of the place.

"I forbid this marriage."

The astonished company parted right and left to let her pass—a tall, magnificent woman clad in sable velvet. Her face was white as marble, lighted up by

great, dark eyes, and framed in massive braids of midnight hair.

She advanced to the centre of the apartment, and stood with the clergyman before the awe-stricken bridal party. The reverend gentleman at length recovered himself sufficiently to address the unwelcome guest.

"Madam, by what authority do you forbid this marriage?"

"By the best authority, sir, if I am not in error."

"You will have the kindness to explain yourself."

"Gentlemen, I accuse that man at the altar with the murderer of Randolph Lee!"

An ominous silence filled the room. Mr. Hazelton put his hand to his head and uttered some smothered ejaculation. Adelaide moved a little apart, and stood rooted to the spot, with her gaze frozen to the passionless, white face of Ethel Villiers.

"Madam," said the clergyman, in a severe tone of voice, "this is a grave charge. What witness have you?"

"The testimony of my own eyes," she replied, in the same smooth, unmoved tone in which she had previously spoken. "The fifteenth day of June, in the summer of the year that is past, I saw Guy Hazelton give to Randolph Lee the blow that hurled him over the precipice. Was it murder, or was it not?"

"Are you ready to swear to this?"

"I have already sworn." She turned towards the door. A tall man clad in black advanced from the hall. "There is your prisoner!" she said, indicating Hazelton with her slender, white finger.

No opposition was made to the arrest. The warrant was read, also the deposition of Miss Villiers, and before the company had recovered their senses Guy Hazelton was on his way to the county gaol.

Miss Villiers disappeared as she had come, silently. She had recognized no one of her old friends, spoken to no one of those with whom she had once been familiar. Her mission was accomplished—she had her revenge.

CHAPTER IV.

THE day of Hazelton's trial arrived. The court-room was thronged. The romantic circumstances of the case, the extraordinary beauty of the principal witness, the high social standing of the accused—all combined to bring together the largest company that had ever assembled at that place on a similar occasion.

Adelaide Wynne, against her tearful protest, was summoned as a witness in the case. She had been an inmate of the hall at the time of Mr. Lee's disappearance; she was the woman for whom the murder had evidently been committed, and so in spite of her shrinking dread of that gaping, curious crowd, she was taken to the court-room.

It is useless to dwell on the particulars of the trial. Ethel Villiers was placed in the witness-box, and testified that on the fifteenth of the previous June, being a guest at Hazelton Hall, she had risen early, as was her custom, and gone out for a walk. She had taken the path to the cliffs, and, wearied with the ascent, seated herself on a stone behind a clump of barbary bushes. While sitting there, Mr. Hazelton appeared. He was strongly agitated, and this emotion in no wise subsided when he was joined by Randolph Lee.

Their interview was stormy. Their conversation related to Mr. Hazelton's ward, Miss Wynne. Both gentlemen professed to love her; both were bound to win her. Hazelton threatened—Lee defied him; and, in the midst of it, Hazelton sprang forward and dealt Lee a blow on the temple that sent him over the cliff. Mute with horror, Ethel had stolen away and made no sign. Afterwards, she could not bring herself to betray her host, and so she had kept the dread secret until the news reached her that the murderer was about to marry an innocent woman. She could hold her peace no longer.

There was a lengthy cross-examination, eliciting nothing further. The witness was calm and cool; the crafty lawyers could pick no flaw in her straightforward, brief, and succinct testimony.

The evidence was all in—Mr. Hazelton had offered little by way of defence—and the case was given to the jury. They announced their verdict without leaving their seats. The prisoner was guilty.

He had expected it: so the announcement made no impression upon him. He had sat like a stone statue from first to last.

The judge rose to pronounce the penalty.

There was a wild commotion without—a heavy clattering of horse's hoofs—a mad shout from the crowd, which fell apart, like the waters of the Red Sea, before the hasty advance of a tall, gaunt figure, stained with mud and the dust of travel. He reached the judicial bench, and removing his hat, stood up uncovered before the people. And it was no wonder that they were dumb. Pale as death, with a livid scar from a wound, scarcely healed, across his temple, and bearing all the marks of some severe illness, Randolph Lee—in the flesh or in the spirit—it was surely he!

Hazelton bent forward with distended eyeballs. All life and light had gone out of his face; it was vacant as that of an idiot.

An intense hush pervaded the great court-room, and pallor sat on every countenance. Even the stern old judge lost his colour as he met the uplifted eyes that he had thought asleep in death months before. The people were quite uncertain whether they were dealing with a man or a phantom.

Lee spoke, addressing the judge:

"Sir, forbear the sentence! The prisoner at the bar, charged with the murder of Randolph Lee, is innocent! for I stand before you a living man—a witness in his favour. I am the man whom you charge him with having murdered!"

A wild hurrah rent the air. Men were mad with enthusiasm—women wept and fainted. Mr. Hazelton fell on his knees and thanked God that he was not a murderer! Let what would come, his soul was clear of that awful stain.

Adelaide Wynne was taken out of the room unconscious. Ethel, with strangely glittering eyes, and blood-red cheeks, maintained her place, intent upon everything that passed. Was she to be balked of her revenge at last?

Mr. Lee stood forth in the witness-box. His story was short and conclusive. We give only its substance.

He said that at the time of the affair, he and Mr. Hazelton were engaged in an angry altercation; he had defied the other, and in the heat of passion Mr. Hazelton had struck him a heavy blow on the temple. He (Lee) was standing on the very verge of the cliff overhanging the sea, and the force of the blow had hurled him over. He had struck once, before reaching the water, on a sharp, jagged rock, some feet from the top of the cliff. The cold water had restored his half-departed senses, and although weak and confused, he comprehended his situation. He was a good swimmer, but his strength was gone from him; he could only float at the mercy of the waves, and manage to keep above water. The force of the tide drew him out some distance from land, and he was picked up by an outward-bound vessel. By the promise of a large sum of money, he induced the captain to land him at Newport. Here he was seized with a violent fever—arising from the inflammation of his wound, where he had struck the sharp rock—and for five long months he tossed unconsciously on a bed of sickness. The people where he was knew not even his name, and there were no papers in his well-filled pocket-book to identify him. So they nursed him carefully, and after a time he returned.

Weeks passed before he was able to sit up; but as soon as his strength would admit, he went back to the vicinity of Hazelton Hall. At the village, the tidings of Mr. Hazelton's approaching marriage met him the first thing. And Adelaide Wynne was to be the bride. He had, then, no further business there; but he still lingered, and sometimes by night he climbed the steep cliff, and wondered why he had not met his death there.

The night before the intended wedding-day he had left the vicinity, and had only been recalled to it by reading in a local paper a confused account of the arrest of Mr. Hazelton for the murder of his guest.

He hoped the court would acquit the accused. The assault had been made in an unguarded moment, in the heat of passion, and was not a cool, premeditated attempt to murder.

The witness sat down. The court conferred apart, and after some alteration Mr. Hazelton was discharged.

Lee went up to him, and the two men clasped hands. Lee's generous forgiveness, Hazelton's bitter remorse, shone distinctly on their grave faces, and were manifested in that firm, silent grasp. They were at peace.

CHAPTER IV.

THE next day after the arrest of her guardian, Adelaide Wynne had left the hall and gone to stay with a distant cousin, five miles up the coast. The associations of the hall were too painful to her, and she longed for rest.

At this quiet seaside village, Randolph Lee found her the morning after the trial. He wanted to see her once more before he left the country. She met him quietly, but hardly dared trust herself to speak.

"Adelaide," he said, "I have called to say goodbye. I have proved the innocence of the man, you love, and now you are free to be happy. To-morrow I leave the country."

She could not speak, but sat there motionless, her hands clutching the crimson folds of her morning-dress. He went on:

"Once I dared to think myself beloved; once I lived a little life of rapture. I was cruelly undeceived. After the illness into which I was thrown by the injuries received that fifteenth of June, I came up here to Scotland, and the first news I heard was that you were soon to be married to Guy Hazelton. Of course I gave up all hope, but I could not smother the desire to see

you once more. The night before your intended marriage, I saw you for a moment, surrounded by your bridal flattery, flushed and excited. I was on the terrace; you in your sitting-room, unconscious of the keen anguish so near you. I thought you happy, and so I left you. Now, I am going away for a long time, perhaps for ever, and I shall pray always for you and yours. Good-bye."

He took her still hand in his. She staggered to her feet, but no word came to her pale lips. She only realized that she was losing him for all time.

"Will you not speak to me Adelaide, now that I am going?"

"Oh, Heaven, what can I say?" He turned just in time to catch her as she sank forward.

"Randolph do not leave me!" she cried, clinging to him. "I love you so! and I have been so wretched!" He drew her face close down to his own.

"Is it so? Did you love me, after all?"

"You filled my heart from the very first, Adelaide." "And you will not go away, now?"

"Only when you will go with me. So, at last, it came out right. Randolph and Adelaide were united early in March, and he took her away with him.

Guy Hazelton still lives at the hall, a desolate, reserved man—old before his time. But though he never goes into company, his hand is ever ready and his ear open to the calls of charity; and many a humble home is happy to-day because of his kindness. Ethel Villiers died a year ago in a lunatic asylum.

C. A.

VESPERUS.

LAMP of the Faithful, quiet-bringing star,
By seraphs tended in the dome afar,
Who, though they veil each luminous, calm face,
With tenderest love watch o'er our troubled race—

Shine out! Shine out!

LAMP of the Faithful, soothe the sick one's bed,
Shed mellow influence on the warrior's head,
Who now o'er-wearied with red battle's pomp,
Would change for harps of peace the snarling tromp.

Harps heard in dreams!

LAMP of the Faithful, on the awful sea
Let storm-tost mariners look up to thee
That bidst the demons of the tempest cease
Awhile for silent, sacred moonlight's tender peace—
Soul-folding peace!

LAMP of the Faithful, through the forest-boughs
Shed sweet repose upon the pioneer-brows—
Symbol of that long-looked-for gentle time
When art, religion, science make the rudest clime—
Brimful of stars!

LAMP of the Faithful! now thou beamest there;
Now will we softly breathe one mighty prayer,
Then, smiling on thee, sink to sacred rest,
Calm on each brow and balm in every breast!

Thanks, faithful star!

W. R. W.

ITALIAN MARRIAGES.

THE restrictions which make solitude in the world painful to ladies, do not apply with equal force to women of inferior rank; few of them, whether they marry or not, leave the world; they have plenty to do in it, and seem quite satisfied with their lot. Carmela, having had no broken matches, has given me but scanty information concerning popular courtships and marriages. The parents settle the match between themselves, and then refer to the young. I need not say that in

England the young people settle it first, then refer to the old. However, compulsion is, I believe, quite out of the question. The marriage being agreed upon by all parties, it is solemnized either in the open day—a proceeding, it is solemnized, bare-faced—or at twilight, when the bride steals out to church, escorted by a few friends. She is dressed, in her best, has plenty of chains and rings, and wears a gold spadella and flowers in her hair.

We once met one of these drowsy twilight brides, and very pretty and modest she looked, leaning on the arm of her father, who gravely scattered sugar-plums to the boys in the street. She was going to the cathedral, and the bridegroom was invisible. In Rome they make sure of being never seen, by marrying at four in the morning, which must make the wedding-day feel rather tedious. The Sorrento sposa does not leave her new home for a week, during which she is all but invisible; after this she appears once more, and acts her usual part. I am sorry to say that Italian wives are not very happy. Their husbands rarely trust or honour them; they treat them like children, and are as jealous as Turks. An Italian wife rarely knows the price of

anything, not even of meat or vegetables, for it is the man who buys, even in the middle-class.

A Roman wife told me that, when she married, she could not have five baiochi without her husband's knowledge. He was *was kind* and fond of her, but mistrustful and jealous. In Sorrento, and in all the south, it is still a rule that peasant women, though taught how to read, must not know how to write; the reason is obvious; if these frail and dangerous creatures knew how to write, they would indite love-letters at once.

DEATH FROM SIMPLE OVERWORK.

It is not in dressmakers' rooms alone that working to death is the order of the day, but in a thousand other places; in every place, I had almost said, where a "thriving business" has to be done, and where the economy of the transaction is based exclusively on the physical capacity of the man and woman,—on the unreclaimable flesh, blood, and brain,—on life itself. We take the first and most prominent craft of the land, statesmanship, and what is its picture? What is there in our Commons, but one great strain to think in competition, to work in competition; to act in competition, beyond and above the powers of all human endurance? To search after place, and if not after place, after power, what taxation is put on the living heart and the misused brain? We turn from those who represent our people by the speaking voice, to those who represent it in literature, and again what a spectacle! How many of the editors of papers, who have written so urgently on the fate of Miss Walkley, dare look their own fate honestly in the face? To wield with an unknown pen, for a few short years—seven at most, I believe, on the average—the governance of thought through literature;—to give the body no rest at night, nor peace by day;—to have at all times and seasons a heart making up in the rapidity of its action what it wants in power, and trying to keep abreast with the giant phantom that moves with it; as vainly as a child by running tries during a long day to compete with its father's walk;—to hold on at this vain effort, to sink under it, to rush to Swiss mountains and German watering places, seeking the renewal of life in an organism that is destroyed;—to find no reality in hope, and inevitably to die; such is the fate of the overworkers in the literary world;—of those who of all others "think all men mortal but themselves."

In the learned professions, once more, especially in the law and in medicine, what is there so visible as the black-pall hanging over every successful man,—over-work? Who die, on an average, at thirty-eight years? These men. I have myself seen a member of my profession fail at his work even more certainly than the Regent-street milliner; and I believe, after men of literature, there stand out no class who die more surely and abundantly as the victims of the prevailing delusion.

We descend from professions to trades, and manual callings, and there what do we find? We will take the blacksmith as a type. If the poets were true, there is no man so hearty, so merry, as the blacksmith; he rises early and strikes his sparks before the sun: he eats and drinks and sleeps as no other man. Working in moderation, he is, in fact, in one of the best of human positions physically speaking. But we follow him into the city or town, and we see the stress of work on that strong man, and what then is his position in the death-rate of his country? In Marylebone, blacksmiths die at the rate of thirty-one per thousand per annum, or eleven above the mean of the male adults of the country in its entirety. The occupation, instinctive almost as a portion of human art, unobjectionable as a branch of human industry, is made by mere excess of work, the destroyer of the man. He can strike so many blows per day, walk so many steps, breathe so many breaths, produce so much work, and live an average say of fifty years; he is made to strike so many more blows, to move so many more steps, to breathe so many more breaths per day, and to increase altogether a fourth of his life. He meets the effort, and the result is, that, producing for a limited time a fourth more work, he dies at thirty-seven for fifty; and he and his class similarly placed, dissolve away each year at the rate of eleven per thousand quicker than the rest of the soothsaying masses amongst whom they have been cast, as follows in life and its burdens.

With needlewomen of all kinds, including milliners, dressmakers, and ordinary sempstresses, there are three miseries—over-work, deficient air, and either deficient food or deficient digestion. There is nothing in the main to be said against needlework for women: it is one of the best of occupations, in one sense, for thousands of them; and it is infinitely better adapted to them, in every department, than to men. But the mischiefs of the trade, in the metropolis especially, are that it is monopolized by some twenty-six capitalists, who under the advantages that spring from capital, can not only make a great show, but can bring in capital to force economy out of labour. This power tells throughout the whole class: if a dressmaker can get a little circle

of customers, such is the competition that in her home she must work to the death to hold it together; and this same over-work she must of necessity inflict on any wife assist her: if she fail, or do not try independently, she must join an establishment, where the labour is not less, but where her money is safe. Placed thus, she becomes a mere slave, tossed about with the variations of society: now at home in one room, starving or near to it; then engaged fifteen, sixteen, or even eighteen hours out of the twenty-four, in an air that is scarcely tolerable, and on food which, if it even be good, cannot be digested in the absence of pure air.

On these victims consumption, which is purely a disease of bad air, feeds; on these causes consumption mounts to the head of the fatal maladies of this country; for these reasons needlewomen stand, with clerks and shoemakers, highest on the lists of the most fatal malady. But it is not because they are needlewomen; it is because they are women overworked and under-nourished.

OVERWORK AND LEGISLATION.

But what if an arbitrary system of State interference were consistent with the spirit and temper of the English people? Would it then do good or advance the position of the employed? Impossible! An ignorant people can never be governed into knowledge, a rigidly governed people can never exist long, unless it be and continue ignorant. The science of social life like that of chemistry, has its elements, which have their repulsions, their affinities, and their combinations. Concerning these it may be said that, while the union of ignorance and obedience is often slight, and the union of knowledge and rigid obedience impossible, the union of independence and of knowledge is the firmest, the most enduring, the safest of all combinations.

In a word, the Government is not required to interfere in the management of special sections of the community when knowledge is well distributed; while, when knowledge is not universal, Government cannot interfere without appearing to exercise an arbitrary authority which is not in accordance with the national feeling in respect to the functions and the obligations of the supreme power.

And yet there are duties that our legislators might perform, not precisely as legislators, but as distinguished exemplars and practical teachers. We all love the House of Commons; we reverence its history, its faith, its courage, and, in the main, its wisdom. I would speak of it with profoundest respect; but as a physiologist who has learned to reckon up the capacities of the human organism by the balance and weight, I am bound to state a plain conviction that that house would do better if it went to bed sooner, and did not sit such an immense number of hours at one time. I am sure, under such a plan, its members would live longer; and I am sure they would do more work. But these are minor considerations compared with the effect which their example would exert over the nation. It reads absurdly, indeed, from the House of Commons, that it should talk of redressing the wrongs of the overworked, when it sets the boldest example of excessive mental and physical taxation, and not rarely of absolute exhaustion resulting from attempts which, if successful, were more than mortal.

There is yet another way in which the Legislature could render essential service. It could enlighten by opening a Royal Commission of Inquiry into the effects of over-work and the extent to which it is carried on. I see that in this direction some promise of an effort has, through the exertions of Lord Shaftesbury, been made. In fact, there is somewhere under the protection of the Government a Commission of Inquiry in which questions relating to over-work are, or ought to be, under discussion. I think, however, that a feeling, almost universal amongst sanitary men—is correct; that this commission is not broad enough nor active enough; that in fact, it does not meet the question at issue at all; and that what is really demanded is a Board of Inquiry as complete, as energetic, and as practical, as that which sat to investigate the state of the army in the Crimea, and from which the army may be said to have received a new lease of life.

OVERWORKED MONEY-MAKERS AND THEIR END.

The history of these overworked money-making men is itself sufficiently repulsive: in my own experience as a physician, six of such men have fallen by their own hands; but their individual miseries are as nothing compared with that which they inflict on all beneath them, he who will not, in his devotion to one object, respect his own life, can have little respect for that of others; it is with him as with one before him, *aut Cesar aut nullus*; heads that can be bought must bend to his will, and ghostly faces be the companions of his own shadow. The needle-woman dying at her needle, the clerk coughing up his life at his desk, the blacksmith panting at his anvil—these are they who are the most pitiable victims of that mania for acquiring wealth by over-work which destroys its own advocate, and in the end does not allow so much work to be done in this world as the world wants and nature has provided for.

Lastly, there is an end leading to over-work, and all the train of evils adjudged to it, which on the first blush seems more pardonable. A man or a woman says, I work thus and thus: I over-work it is true; but I do it that my children may be independent, and may reap the fruits of my industry. In reasonable limits it is naturally right, not merely to protect but to provide for children; but it is against all law to try to place a future generation independent on the sacrifice and the destruction of the present. Why should one person now living have a day, an hour, a minute taken from his life that his child should inherit any amount of wealth derived from that transaction? Nature herself in the end corrects this folly, from which so much misery ensues. She says to her children, through her mighty though silent voice:—Here is the world as a garden: take it, live upon it, make it a garden of richness and pleasure and delight, for it is yours to enjoy. Some of you must govern, some teach, some attend the sick, some invent new works or new pastimes, some sing songs, others tell great thoughts read from the earth; some must use the hand and till the soil, and carve the stone and build the temple or the capitol. But mark this, all must work for its successor! Then as now the garden must be supervised, weeded, embellished; and those who live then must do the work; or, in spite of all your providence they must starve. You may kill your millions by over-work: you may charge your own age with any amount of misery you please; but this is certain, that the earth which never rests itself, will never allow its people to live on the labours of the past.

These are the truths which, according to my view, ought to be taught. I see no chance for the legislator so long as the public mind remains uninfluenced by them; for, wise though he may be, he must not drive nails into heads, however stupid; and when the popular mind is fully influenced, there will be no advantage in legislation, because then every man and every woman will have a law in themselves which they will follow.—Dr. Richardson.

POSTAGE ON LETTERS, &c., FOR INDIA AND CHINA.

ARRANGEMENTS have been made with the French Post-office, by which, after the 1st of August next, letters and printed papers may be forwarded to India and China by the French line of mail packets, at the same rates of postage as are chargeable on letters and printed papers sent *via* Marseilles for conveyance by British packet, as shown in the following table:—Addressed to Aden, Ceylon, Madras, Calcutta, and Pondicherry, not exceeding half an ounce 10d.; above half an ounce and not exceeding one ounce, 1s. 8d.; above one ounce and not exceeding two ounces, 3s. 4d.; above two ounces and not exceeding three ounces, 5s.; each additional ounce, 1s. 8d. To Cochin China, Hong-Kong, Shanghai, and Singapore, not exceeding half an ounce, 1s. 4d.; above half an ounce and not exceeding one ounce, 2s. 8d.; above one ounce and not exceeding two ounces, 5s. 4d.; above two ounces and not exceeding three ounces, 8s.; each additional ounce, 2s. 8d. Newspapers 3d. each, not exceeding four ounces, 6d.; above four ounces and not exceeding half a pound, 1s.; above half a pound and not exceeding one pound, 2s.; every additional half-pound, 1s. Letters, &c., intended to be forwarded by these packets must be especially addressed "By French mail packet from Marseilles." Upon letters for Ceylon the postage must be prepaid, but upon those for the British possessions in India and Hong-Kong, the postage may either be paid in advance, or left to be paid on delivery, at the option of the sender. In all cases, however, where the postage is not prepaid, an additional rate will be charged on delivery. The prepayment of postage on letters for Pondicherry, Saigon (Cochin China), and Shanghai (at which places France has Post Office agents) is optional, without any fine for those sent unpaid. The postage on newspapers, books, and other printed papers must in all cases be prepaid according to the regulations in force with respect to similar articles sent by the British packets. The French packets leave Marseilles on the 19th of each month for Alexandria, in correspondence with a line from Suez proceeding to Aden, Point-de-Galle, Madras, Calcutta, Singapore, Cochin-China, Hong-Kong, and Shanghai. Letters, &c., intended to be forwarded by them must be posted in, or reach London, at the latest in time for the day mail to France of the 18th.—By command of the Postmaster-General, Bowland Hill, Secretary. General Post Office. July 29, 1863.

AN ash-tree has been cut down at Sir E. Strachey's, Stowey, Somerset, which is said to have been the largest maiden ash in England. The stock measured forty feet long, and eighteen feet five inches in circumference under the bark. It took thirty-four powerful horses to draw it, and it left amidst the loud cheers of the inhabitants of the village.

THE LONDON READER.

FOR THE WEEK ENDING AUGUST 15, 1863.

THE WORK OF THE SESSION.

An impartial résumé of the Parliamentary labours of 1863 may be found socially interesting and politically instructive, and we shall endeavour, in the present number, to render such to the patrons of the LONDON READER from the commencement to the end of the session.

Beginning with the royal speech at the opening of the Parliamentary campaign on the 5th of February last, we had in the first paragraph of that important document an announcement of the intended alliance of the Royal houses of Great Britain and Denmark, by the marriage of the Prince of Wales with a niece of the Danish Sovereign; on the same day the Prince, Heir-apparent to the Throne of the British Empire, for the first time took his seat among the peers of his future realm. Immediately upon this event, it was announced that the Queen-Mother, in her maternal regard for the welfare of her children, had declined, for her second son, the acceptance of the throne of Greece, rendered vacant by the expulsion of Otho, of Bavaria. On the 19th of the month the House of Commons adopted resolutions for a liberal provision for the Prince and Princess of Wales, and with the exception of some immaterial objections to the proposed cession of the Ionian Islands to the Greek kingdom as now recognized, the month of February passed away without any incident calling for special observation.

The beginning of March witnessed the consummation of a union closely, and we trust happily, associated with the future destinies of the country—the marriage of Albert Edward, Prince of Wales, with the Princess Alexandra of Denmark, and scarcely had the auspicious event become matter of history, than both Houses of Parliament set to work upon the foreign policy of the Government as comprehensively and discursively as if it had become their duty to legislate for all the nations of the earth. The affairs of Poland presented a theme for debate that increased in interest as the war against that unhappy country increased in fervency and strength. At length a motion of Mr. Pope Hennessy was submitted, recommending interposition, but in deference to the marked disinclination of the Government to adopt any measure that might lead to actual hostilities, the motion was withdrawn. The subject, nevertheless, has been sedulously kept before the House, and even on the last night of the session it was referred to by the Leader of the Opposition in the House of Lords. The result of the various discussions on Polish suffering and Russian oppression may be summed up thus—that England desires to see Poland rescued from her oppression, but would have such rescue effected in a way that may not hazard the peace of Europe. She gives the Poles the benefit of her sympathy and her condolence, but she will not lift her arm either for their protection or defence.

Next to the Polish difficulty, has been that of the American quarrel, which has been kept before both houses with remarkable persistency, but without any result to either belligerent. The policy of Earl Russell has been in this important affair consistent with that which has ever characterized his political career, namely, expediency; and as a natural consequence nothing definite has been adopted beyond the fact of a very equivoocal neutrality. Early in the Session attention was called, at the instigation of the American minister in this country, to the alleged fitting out of war-ships for the Confederate States; while, on the other hand, the Government was taken to task for its inaction in cases of repeated seizure of British ships by the war-steamer of the Federal Government, but carrying out the principle of Earl Russell, it was not found expedient to interfere with the action of the American Prize Courts, and British commerce was consequently sacrificed to the doctrine of Expediency.

Later in the Session, Mr. Roebuck invited a debate upon the subject of a friendly mediation between the Southern States and the Federal Government, but subsequently retired from the proposed discussion "out of respect for Lord Palmerston."

The conduct of the Brazilian Government having given just cause of offence to that of Great Britain, in respect of some outrages perpetrated by Brazilian subjects upon British vessels and seamen, for which reparation was refused, the diplomatic relations between the two countries ceased, and the explanations afforded by the Government were so far satisfactory to both Houses of Parliament that they adopted the policy of Earl Russell, and for the present the connexion between this country and Brazil is severed.

The affairs of Italy occupied the attention of both Houses, but without leading to any unravelment of the intricate policy of the Emperor of the French with regard to Rome, and the long-desired unification of the Italian kingdom under the constitutional regime of Victor Emmanuel.

The conduct of the Ottoman Government in its relations with Servia, was early brought before Parliament by Mr. Gregor, who has warmly identified himself with the wrongs and claims of the Servian race, but his efforts were without other result than the expression of sympathy naturally felt for a brave and long-suffering people. The Taepings in China, also found an advocate in Lord Naas, and the Japanese were equally fortunate with Mr. Cochrane.

The Budget was of course the great feature of the Session, and was presented under very favourable auspices, the Chancellor of the Exchequer being enabled to show a handsome surplus of revenue over probable expenditure, notwithstanding the distress that had for a time prostrated Lancashire, and had partially affected the agricultural districts of Ireland. Thus he was enabled to pursue his task of reducing the public burdens, by remissions of taxes and duties, to the extent of three millions and a third, under the head of duties upon minor mercantile transactions, a reduction of one shilling per pound in the duty on tea; and on the general rate of the income-tax by twopence, leaving the sugar duties in their present state until next year. He had proposed, on the other hand, to abolish the exemption of charities from the income-tax, but was induced to abandon that feature of his budget as also an intended tax on clubs.

A vote for the purchase of the land at South Kensington, on which the Exhibition Buildings were erected, was carried without very much opposition; but a subsequent proposition for the purchase of the building itself was sharply contested, and rejected by the House with a most overwhelming majority, and such as, upon almost any other question, would have endangered the stability of the Government.

In March a motion was proposed by Mr. Lindsay, disengaging the future building of wooden ships; but notwithstanding the alleged superiority of iron-built vessels for war purposes, the motion was rejected, on a division, by 164 to 81. Later in the session a Bill, providing for the expense of new fortifications, was introduced, and led to several animated debates, the opposition to it, however, was defeated by a majority of 182 to 61.

The special condition of Lancashire as regards finance also naturally claimed attention, and the principal measure resulting from it has been the Union Relief Aid Continuance Bill, with a vote carried by Mr. Gladstone of £1,200,000, to be advanced on the security of local rates for public works, the latter enabling the local authorities to provide employment for their poor from their own resources.

With regard to the question of Cotton Supply, introduced by Mr. Caird on the 3rd of July, nothing definite has been arrived at, and a motion for a select committee upon the subject was negatived.

The annual question of the Ballot was introduced as usual by Mr. Berkely on the 15th of June, and negatived, as a matter of course, by a division of 122 to 102; while Sir George Grey's Bill to amend the law against Corrupt Practices at Elections, was carried, and, it is anticipated, will greatly simplify the action of the courts, as well as of Parliament, in all future cases of disputed elections. Some minor improvements were also introduced under Government auspices, in relation to the Registration of Births and Deaths in Ireland, and for facilitating the winding-up of old savings' banks; but, indisputably the greatest measure of reform during the Session has been the Bill of Lord Chancellor Westbury, for the Revision of the Statute Law of the realm. By this salutary measure a commission has been appointed to undertake the herculean task of reducing the chaos of our statutory enactments into form and order. Setting apart those which have become extinct, or obsolete, through lapse of time, change of custom, and repeal; but which still crowd and confuse the Statute-book. It is anticipated that this task, if satisfactorily performed, will have the effect of preparing the way for a Department of Justice, which shall, by its vigilance, prevent the law from again falling into the almost inexplicable confusion that now disgraces it, and impedes its useful action.

The Bill of the same noble lord, by which no less than 320 advowsons in the patronage of the Lord Chancellor, are to be sold, and the fund therefrom arising applied to the augmentation of poor livings, is a specimen of disinterested self-denial, rarely met with among the dispensers of patronage. The measure will be of incalculable benefit to the poorer class of clergy, and much credit is due to the Government, whose sanction and cordial co-operation enabled Lord Westbury to carry his beneficial project into effect.

The Prison Ministers' Bill was introduced by Sir George Grey; by the provisions of this Act, prisoners of the Roman Catholic persuasion will be enabled to have the consolation of ministers of their own creed as a

matter of right, and no longer of favour. Here, then, has been another step in the right direction, and it will do much to allay the heart-burnings that have so long prevailed upon the subject.

The subject of Church-rates has been introduced under three aspects during the Sessions; first, Sir John Trelawney's motion for their "abolition;" secondly, Mr. Aloock's for "redemption;" and lastly, Mr. Newdegate's for "commutation." It is hardly necessary now to say that each effort resulted in a failure, and the vexed question of Church-rates and their unequal pressure stands over for another parliamentary campaign. A similar fate befell Lord Ebury's motion for a commission to inquire into, and revise the Burial Service of the Church of England; and the proposition of Mr. Buxton for relaxing the rules requiring subscription to the Thirty-nine Articles, was disposed of by moving "the previous question." The progress of Church-reform in these matters appears, however, to be but temporarily checked, and there is much of expectation and hope for the future.

Among the host of miscellaneous subjects that have occupied the attention of Parliament, we may enumerate the Bill of Mr. Patten, for the Prohibition of the use of Poisoned Grain by Agriculturists; Mr. McMahon's Irish Salmon Fisheries' Bill; a measure for the preservation of the public from infection in Hired Carriages; the Protection of Women and Children from Assaults, by the interposition of the lash; the Decimalizing of Weights and Measures; and the Amendment of the Law of Partnership. The prisons and their occupants have also received useful notice, and the hideous disclosures of the Report of the Children's Employment Commission, will not fail to compel legislative action on the subject early in the next session.

The whole subject of transportation and penal servitude has been discussed with a view to some wholesome improvements in the system, and the report of the Royal Commission on Greenwich Hospital has also received attention. An effort to obtain a select committee on the Game Laws has failed through the powerful influence of the landed proprietors, and they still remain a blot upon English jurisprudence.

The Galway Packet Outrast, and that of Mr. Churchward, for the conveyance of the mails between Dover, Calais, and Ostend, have both afforded subject for warm debate and serious collision between the promoters and opponents of the respective bills; but beyond this, little has occurred to disturb the equanimity of parties in either House; and thus the Session of 1863 has died out quietly and tamely, leaving behind it a memory which, if not dignified by any great Legislative triumph, is at least, free from the stigma of any great Legislative blunder.

La France announces that the number of workmen employed on the fortifications of Cronstadt has been increased from 15,000 to 18,000.

COLONEL POMERANCOFF has ordered the peasants to massacre the landed proprietors, promising in the name of the Emperor to divide their lands among them.

THE Prince and Princess of Wales will take their departure from Osborne on the 10th August and on the 12th their Royal Highnesses will go to Scotland.

THERE was a fresh coating of snow on Ben Nevis on the 25th ult., and Ben Wyvis was also found with its summit slightly powdered.

Two severe shocks of earthquake were experienced at Kingston and Spanish Town, Jamaica, on the 8th ult., causing considerable alarm; the undulations were eastward.

THE castles of Wionzoy, Chorzow, and Rodzeb have been pillaged, and the proprietors Prondzyski, Zbijewski, and Chramigowski, and Madame Rogawski were whipped and transported to Warsaw.

THE *Opinione* of Turin states from Caprera that Garibaldi's wound is healed, and that he is beginning to ride on horseback, and will soon, it is hoped, be able to walk with a stick only.

MR. MONCKTON MILNES, M.P. for Pontefract, is about to be removed to the House of Lords by the title of Baron Houghton of Houghton—an estate long possessed by his family.

THE social condition of Warsaw is lamentable. The Russian soldiery strike men dead in the streets, and under the pretext of domiciliary visits, people, who are supposed to have money, are systematically robbed.

A DESPATCH received by the English Minister at Athens announces that the new King will leave Copenhagen on September 3. This news caused great joy, for it is hoped that after the arrival of his Majesty all calamities will be at an end.

A CLAIM of the Hon. Ralph Gordon Noel Milbanke, commonly called Viscount Ockham, and only surviving son of William, Earl of Lovelace, to the title and dignity of Baron Wentworth for the peerage of England, has been brought before the Committee of Privileges. The peerage was created by writ of summons in the 21st year of Henry VIII.



[ABDUCTION OF VIVA.]

THE SILVER DIGGER.

CHAPTER XXI

DIEGO TO THE RESCUE.

DIEGO had passed the evening at Torre's. He had walked with the duenna, sung snatches of songs, told exciting and soul-moving tales, and at the same time taken a little too much of the generous wine she supplied him. At a late hour he took a maudlin adieu of her, and set out, with a bottle in each pocket, for a little shed in the neighbourhood, which he and his mule had made their head-quarters.

"That angelic maid has really found the way to my heart," he muttered.

The squire had learned through Enriquita, who had been visited by Señora Mion, that his master was not dead; but he was not prepared for the sight presented to him suddenly, as he thus sat under the shed—Captain Mion and Viva riding past, on their way from the mazaines, as recorded.

He gazed in stupid amazement until they were out of sight, and then he mounted his mule and followed them.

During the next hour or two he traced them to the house of Señora Mion, crept near enough to hear the party talking, observed the approach of Torre and beheld the exciting scenes which followed—the assaults of Torre and his friends upon the house, and our hero's brave defence, &c.

As the struggle waxed warm, the squire secreted himself and his mule in the edge of the wood before referred to, and drank frequently from his bottle.

The result can be imagined.

By the time our hero made his attempt to escape from the house, Diego had passed under the influence of the wine he had taken. His fears and anxieties left him, and he became serene. He felt himself at perfect liberty to do as he pleased. The house before him—in fact the world at large—was quite at his service. He had a lively sense of being the proprietor of the neighbouring estates, and felt himself a sort of Grand Lama of the district.

"What's this I see!" he demanded, as he glanced at Torre and the group around him. "A lot of noisy scoundrels kicking up a disturbance under my very nose?"

His club began to get restless, and his feet commenced moving toward the house. This movement continued, until he beheld a terrific struggle going on between Mion and his assailants, in the rear of the building.

As terrible as were the odds against our hero, he had resolutely defended Viva and himself, discharging his

carbine at the foremost of his foes, and then clubbing them with its breech. He rescued his betrothed from her father, and kept the enemy at bay, so as to give Señora Mion a chance to conduct her towards the house. Pistols were fired, and knives flashed in the moonlight, but Mion was as quick and wary as he was courageous, and contrived to hold his own. This running fight continued with fearful fury until he had exhausted much of his strength, and received several severe wounds and severe bruises.

"Seize him! Down with him!" cried the silver-digger, in a perfect paroxysm of excitement. "It's no matter, men, if you kill him! Close in upon him, all together. Now we have him!"

The assailants joined him in his attack upon our hero, all rushing at him at the same instant, and Torre managed to give him a blow which stretched him senseless upon the ground.

It was at this critical juncture that Diego took part in the scene.

With a roar like that of a wild bull, he leaped into the midst of the assailants, and wielded his club with a fury equalled only by his dexterity and utter heedlessness of peril. He leaped here and there, yelling like a madman, darted to and fro, and clubbed one man in one direction and another in another.

"It's down with him, eh?" he roared, as he knocked Villaverde head over heels. "Death, fury, and destruction!"

With his quickness, immense strength, and loud voice, he seemed to the enemy nothing less than a terrific demon.

"Now for ye!" the squire added, as he smote one of Villaverde's hired ruffians to the ground. "I have slain twenty better men before breakfast!"

The ferocity with which he laid about him soon put the enemy to the rout. Villaverde arose and fired at the strange interloper a pistol he had been saving for Mion, but the shot did not take effect, and he fell back in a state of actual fear and consternation.

"Dios Salvador!" cried Torre, "what demon of destruction is this? Fall back a little, men, and let us see what we are doing!"

As the assailants fell back, bruised and bleeding, with discharged pistols and weary hands, Diego uttered a hoarse howl of triumph and defiance, seized Mion from Viva's arms, and sprang towards the house.

"Come on, ladies," he exclaimed; "we'll entrench ourselves in the castle!"

He reached the door in safety and raised the crossbar, by thrusting his arm through the hole, and turned the key in the same manner. A moment later the little party was within the house, with the door locked and barred between them and the assailants.

"We can defy them now," remarked the squire, as he relinquished his master to the care of Viva and his mother. "Just bring him back to life while I take a peep at 'em from the roof."

On reaching the house-top, he saw his baffled enemies holding another consultation in front of the house, and bawled at the top of his voice:

"Come on, ye cowardly ruffians! Don't be sneaking about the bushes, you miserable villains!"

The invitation was accepted. Villaverde and his men came and hurled themselves against the door, with threats that were fearful to hear, they having determined on a desperate effort.

It took Diego but a moment to convey Mion to the top of the house, followed by the ladies.

"Come on, you cowardly miscreants," he then shouted, as he flourished his club wildly; "I'll brain a score of ye at a single clip, as I would so many mice! Come on, base caitiffs!"

It was evident that the assailants, having recovered their self-possession, counted upon the helpless condition of Mion, and felt themselves strong enough to do as they pleased, for they held to their purpose.

At the same instant a reinforcement of three men—the three brothers our hero had seen under the mountain—came up the road and joined the assailants. They were welcomed warmly, and as warmly joined in the attack.

"Back all of you!" roared the squire, as he bounded down and up the roof like an enraged tiger. "You are rushing upon death!"

It took the reinforced assailants but a moment to batter down the door, and then they pressed into the room, and hurried up the staircase towards the roof.

For a moment it seemed as if the enemies were having it all their own way; but the next instant, as three of them were ascending to the roof, Diego hurled a huge stone down upon them, which completely cleared the stairs, killing one of the intruders, and injuring one of the others. Another effort to gain the top of the house resulted in a like manner, Diego hurling a stone weighing from one to two hundred pounds, and then dashing others over the battlements.

"Dios Salvador!" cried Torre, as one of the stones crushed a man beside him. "Who and what is that being, man or fiend?"

A general retreat and consultation succeeded, the result of which was that Villaverde mounted his horse, and rode rapidly away towards the mountains, while Torre and his surviving ruffians came back to the house.

"We'll soon have a force here that'll do the business," Torre was heard saying.

Grim and ferocious, with a hoarse shout of defiance and rejoicing, Diego prepared to evacuate the house.

He had exhausted the row of stones around the roof, and realized that he could not longer hold the enemy in check. By this time our hero had recovered his senses under the care of Viva and his mother, and found Torre and his friends sneaking around the house, and watching and waiting for reinforcements, while Diego was bawling defiance at them. Realizing his situation, after Viva had made a few statements and observations, he sprang to his feet and said :

"The villains will soon be reinforced. We must escape to a secret place in the woods while we can. Diego and I can hold the rascals in check, Viva, while you and mother effect your retreat to some point in the woods where we can meet you: say the Hanging Rocks."

This proposition was agreed to, and Mion explained to Diego his purpose. The cartines were loaded, final instructions given to the women, and the entire party hastened down-stairs and out of the house.

They were instantly confronted by their enemies, with Torre at their head.

"Go!" whispered Mion to Viva, as soon as she and Senora Mion had taken possession of the baskets previously prepared for them.

The women retreated, under cover of our hero and his squire, and reached the woods in safety. The assailants made a desperate effort to break the line of defence and protection, but in vain. Retreating slowly and deliberately before the foe, Mion kept them in check until the women had had time to secure their safety. Gaining the shelter of the woods, where the squire had left his mule, it was easy for the two men to avoid the pursuers, and shape their course towards the point to which the ladies had gone. In a few moments they were all safe beyond the sight and hearing of Torre and his companions.

On rejoining the women at the place of rendezvous he had appointed, our hero led them deep into the vast solitudes of the mountains, to a secret cave, which he supposed to be known only to himself.

"It is one of the many similar caves in the Perotos mountains," he said, as he pointed out its size and shape to them, by the light of a torch he had kindled. "You will be safe here in my absence!"

It was a large cavern reaching far underground, and had an entrance so intricately winding among rocks that no one passing near it would have suspected its existence. Mion lost no time in arranging everything for the comfort of his betrothed and mother. Aided by Diego, he brought in bushes, plenty of firewood, kindled a fire, arranged a couch for them to sleep on, expressed his final wishes in regard to their course in his absence, and then took his departure for Jalapa to get a company of soldiers to hunt down the robbers with.

CHAPTER XXI

AN UNEXPECTED TROUBLE.

It was a week later. The silver-digger was pacing to and fro in the parlour of his house, in a state of great excitement. He was dressed in the old clothes he had worn at his mine, and looked even more haggard and vagabondish than when we first saw him.

He was raving, with bloodshot eyes and frenzied gestures of his misfortunes.

First, neither he nor Villaverde had been to obtain any clue to the whereabouts of Viva. Second, the silver bars, he had prepared to forward Santa Anna, had been seized by a party of robbers whom he supposed belonged to the band of Maldonado.

These two circumstances had plunged the monomaniac into a state of mind bordering upon madness and despair.

"Lost, lost!" he raved. "Thirty thousand pounds in silver bars seized by the robbers!"

The words were followed by a hurried and heavy knock upon the door.

"Come in!" shouted the silver-digger.

The person who entered was Santa Anna. There was a stern expression upon his face, and he appeared considerably flushed and annoyed.

"Ah, the general!" said Torre, after a stare of surprise. "Glad to see you. Please be seated."

The general had started at beholding the personal appearance of the silver-digger, and he spent the next minute in closely scrutinizing Torre and observing his movements. To conclude his extraordinary conduct, the visitor drew a slip of paper from his pocket, and appeared to be comparing the characteristics of Torre with some items written thereon.

"The very man!" he at length ejaculated.

"Well, sir, what is the meaning of all this?" asked Torre, who was in no mood to humour such strange actions, will you be seated?"

Santa Anna glanced over his shoulder, and listened a moment to the sounds of footsteps which came to his hearing from the walls in front of the house, and then he sank into a chair, and replaced the slip of paper in his pocket, as he asked :

"Well, Senor Torre, where's the silver?"

"Stolen—seized by the robbers!" the old man replied. "They attacked me and my men, just above Bondo-

rilla, and carried off every ounce of silver in our possession."

The manner in which Santa Anna listened to this statement was that of a man who does not believe a word he is hearing. When the silver-digger had paused in his excited declarations, the general looked at him incredulously a moment, and then arose and stepped to the door. A gesture of his hand called several members of his body-guard into the room.

"Seize this man," he said, indicating Torre—"seize him and bind him!"

The order was executed before the silver-digger could recover his self-possession sufficiently to speak.

"Dios Salvador! What is the meaning of this outrage?" demanded the monomaniac, with a look of wonder and consternation on his face.

"You'll soon learn," replied Santa Anna, in a tone that sounded to the silver-digger like a death-warrant. "As I never struck a man without giving him the reason, permit me to state to you, in brief terms, the cause of your arrest and summary punishment!"

"Oh, speak! I am innocent! It's all a mistake," cried Torre. "What have I done?"

"For a week past," said the general—"in fact, ever since the night of the day on which you visited me at my camp below Jalapa, you have been seen hanging about my men, scattering money among them, and bribing them to receive as their commander some unknown person in whose interest you are acting!"

"What?" gasped Torre, as soon as his surprise would allow him to speak.

"Even you, sir! I have your description here in full, as taken down by a sergeant of the guard," said he, smot his hand upon his pocket. "And you'll soon find that this attempt to entice my men away from me will cost you dearly."

The surprise and terror of the silver-digger kept him silent. He finally thought of the strange counterpart of himself he had seen at the mine, and a new light burst upon him.

"It's another man who has disguised himself to resemble me," he exclaimed. "I assure you, general—"

"There is no use of wasting your breath upon these stale protestations," interrupted Santa Anna. "I was so weak as to place some dependence upon your pretended discovery, and as a consequence I find myself in a position to-day where I would not have been if I had not hearkened to you. In fact, I shall have to raise the siege of Jalapa. Before I retreat, however, I'll punish you richly. Take him out, sergeant," he added, addressing one of his men, "and shoot him, with five minutes for prayers."

It was in vain that the silver-digger protested his innocence, and demanded an examination into his alleged falsehood and treachery. He was taken out and tied to a tree in the garden, and a couple of soldiers commenced digging a grave in which to bury him, while several others prepared to shoot him. Everything was in readiness, and the last of the five minutes allowed him was passing away, when our hero and Viva suddenly drew near the house, attended by his mother.

"Oh! help! help! save me!" moaned Torre, as he recognized his daughter. "I am being murdered!"

Mion and his betrothed sprang to his side, and the former exclaimed, in ringing tones, as he looked around upon the soldiers and their general :

"What's going on here? What's the meaning of this business?"

Captain Mion had been gone a week, lacking a few hours, coming back to the cave just at dusk on the sixth day. He found his loved ones well. The ladies had remained undiscovered, keeping to the cave, and had managed to exist very comfortably, save that they had been continually anxious about Mion.

The result of our hero's tour can be stated in few words.

He had seen General Echavarri, the Captain-General of the province of Vera Cruz, but could not obtain troops from him, as he needed every man at his command to protect Jalapa from Santa Anna. A similar answer had been made to him at Perotos and other places where he had been; but he finally obtained from General Echavarri the promise that a company of infantry should be sent to him as soon as he had repulsed Santa Anna from Jalapa.

"It means, Senor Mion, that I am to be murdered for something I don't know anything about," exclaimed Torre, in answer to our hero's eager questions. "The general is mistaken, and I want you to intercede for me—"

Santa Anna and Mion recognized each other at this juncture, and very cordially shook hands, to the great surprise of Torre.

"There must be some mistake here, general," our hero hastened to say. "Please explain the matter to me."

The general began with the supposed fables of Torre respecting his mine.

"As to this matter," said Mion, "I can testify from my own personal knowledge that he has found such

a mine, and that he has taken a large sum of silver from it."

"Indeed! Your testimony gives quite a different aspect to the case!"

The general went on to narrate how the silver-digger had been hanging about his camp, and tampering with his men. In the midst of these explanations, our hero started, and suddenly cried :

"How strange! Permit me to inform you, general, that I visited General Echavarri recently to ask him to send a force against the robbers, and I have also been to Perotos and elsewhere on a like errand. To come to the point, I have learned from all the generals I have seen that they have been troubled in the same manner, by an old man, apparently Senor Torre!"

"Is it possible?" cried Santa Anna. "Has Senor Torre been here all the time that this affair has been going on?"

"Yes—here and at his mine, as I have learned on good authority. I can vouch for his innocence. The guilty party in this great conspiracy is evidently some person unknown, who has chosen to disguise himself to resemble Senor Torre's well-known personnel to carry out his schemes."

"It must be as you say," responded the general. "I feel, and have long felt, that a gigantic plot is under foot by some person unknown to call all the rival armies to his aid, and to seize upon the government of the nation. Who this man is, and where he hides himself, I have not the slightest idea."

"In regard to my conduct," exclaimed the silver-digger, excitedly, "you have only to ask Senor Villaverde. He knew all about my plans and was with me when I set out with the money."

"Then I must apologize for my hasty and unjust suspicions, Senor Torre," responded the general. "Release him, men, and wait at the door until I am ready and this affair is settled."

The whole party went into the parlour of Torre's house. Our hero's testimony satisfied the general that his late suspicions against Torre were unfounded, and the latter forgave the violence to which he had been subjected, and entered into a renewed agreement with Santa Anna to furnish him with the money he had promised. The general then departed.

"And now, Senor Torre," said Mion, "you and I must come to an understanding about Viva. She has promised to be my wife, and we want your consent to our marriage."

The brow of Torre had involuntarily darkened, but he concealed his real intentions and feelings, as much as possible, and gave his consent to the marriage.

"In the meantime, for a few days," said Senora Mion to Torre, "I want Viva to remain with me, that I may assist her in her preparations for the wedding, since she has no mother of her own."

Torre gave a reluctant assent to this proposition, and took pains to appear unusually pleasant and fatherly. The lovers and Senora Mion passed a pleasant evening with him, and left him in a singularly amiable mood, as far as they could judge from his words and manner.

"Thus, all our way is opening up pleasantly to us," said Mion, as the party were approaching his mother's house. "I think your father is getting disenchanted with Villaverde, and will not give us any further trouble, dear Viva. Did he not say that he was going to his mine to-night?"

CHAPTER XXII

A DESIGN FORMED AND EXECUTED.

The silver-digger waited till his visitors were out of sight, and then set out for Villaverde's residence. He found that worthy unusually smiling and pleasant. The two men talked a long time and renewed their compact with each other. When Torre arose from the interview, his face was flushed and his eyes had a wild expression. His voice was husky as he declared to Villaverde, holding him by the hand, that no earthly power should prevent Viva from becoming his wife.

"Thanks, thanks!" exclaimed Villaverde. "You'll find that your confidence in me is not misplaced. I'll seize Viva at the first opportunity that offers and bring her here. We can keep her in one of my secret rooms a whole year. Perhaps it would be good thing for you to keep away from her a few days, and I can tell her that you don't wish to see her until she's ready to become my wife. I think this course will bring her to the point."

"Very good—try it."

A look of sinister joy appeared on Villaverde's face. The instant Torre was gone, he armed himself and went out on a reconnaissance. He was abroad all night and nearly all the next day. Finally, just before night, he managed to seize Viva, with the aid of his servant, as she was walking in the garden at Mion's, not five rods from the door of the room in which Senora Mion was at the moment preparing supper. By pressing his hand tightly over her mouth, he prevented all outcry, and in a few minutes he was mounted with her on horseback and riding away into the woods.

An hour later, and in the heart of a dense forest, Villaverde paused under a huge tree, where his old housekeeper was already in waiting for another trial of the office of jailer. He had sent her there in anticipation of his success. Blinding the girl secretly to a tree, and instructing Paquita concerning her, he said:

"I am going to send a man here who will take charge of you for a few days."

He rode away accompanied by his attendant, and half-an-hour passed. At the end of this time a horseman was heard advancing towards her, and she was soon face to face with Maldonado the robber.

"A friend of mine has requested me to take you into my keeping for a few days, fair lady," he said. "I hope you will give me as little trouble as possible, for I am not remarkable for my mildness."

He took her away, with Paquita, to his retreat, and shut her up in an interior cave, which appeared to have been fitted up expressly for her reception.

The absence of Viva from the cottage had been discovered in the meantime, and our hero had commenced searching for her. He first went to the house of Villaverde, which he found deserted. Almost madened by his loss, and strongly suspecting Villaverde, he summoned assistance and broke open the house, searching it from top to bottom, but saw nothing unusual, save the extraordinary luxury of the furniture and appointments.

What a weary search followed.

For two or three days Captain Mion searched for Viva, aided by Diego, but failed to obtain any clue to her whereabouts, or of Villaverde's. The only deduction he could make from these facts was that she had been taken to the retreat of Maldonado, and that the robber-chief was holding her in custody for Senor Villaverde.

To arrive at this conclusion was to form another.

He determined to go to the retreat in disguise, in a quiet way—perhaps entirely alone—and see if he could not get some trace of her.

"If General Echavarri should send up the men promised," he said to Diego, "I want you to guide them to the robber's cave, and make an attack. I will show you where the cave is, and give you all the necessary information on the subject of attacking it, and you can convey the knowledge to the officer in command of the troops—should they come."

He took Diego and his mother within a short distance of the cave, pointed out the various approaches, and then took them home. Soon after, having expressed his wishes and plans to them, he set out on his mission.

Our hero had purposely left the *modus operandi* of his introduction to the cave to be decided by circumstances, and he did not have cause to regret his decision. He had not ridden far in the mountains before he met a *padre*, with whom he had a slight acquaintance, and paused to rest his horse and have a little conversation with the priest.

"By the way," the latter observed, after the conversation had lasted awhile; "I have had quite an adventure in the mountains to-day."

"Indeed! What was it?"

"I was pursued by several rough-looking fellows, whom I took to be robbers. Being, as you see, in the garments of my order, I was at first puzzled to explain their conduct, but I finally concluded that they wanted me to perform a marriage ceremony."

The reader can imagine the interest our hero had in these words.

"Where did you see these men?" he asked.

The priest told him.

"Do you suppose that they belong to the band of Maldonado?"

"Yes. In fact, I heard them say that Maldonado wished to see me."

"Enough. Listen."

Our hero told him his story. At its conclusion the priest expressed a conviction that he had been wanted to solemnize a marriage between Viva and her abductor.

"That's my opinion—my full conviction," responded Mion, "and if your reverence will allow me to disguise myself in your garments—"

"Oh, certainly, if you think you can release the girl from the robber's power."

"I can at least try."

The change of garb was effected in a few moments, and the priest then said, as he handed him some papers:

"Should the robber ask your name, you had better hand him these papers as your credentials. It will be well for you to say that you are on a sorrowful mission, and to keep your face muffled closely, as is allowable to a priest under the circumstances I have put before you."

After further advice, the priest added:

"While you are engaged in this matter, I will proceed to your mother's and await your return there."

The two men soon took a cordial leave of each other, and Mion resumed his way through the mountains.

He had not gone far before he was pursued by a couple of the robbers. On being summoned to halt, he obeyed, and was informed that Maldonado wished to see him.

"What for?"

"He wants you to marry one of his friends to a lady. That's all we know about it. If you will go with us peacefully, well and good, but if not—"

"Spare your menaces, my son," interrupted Mion, in a sepulchral voice. "I will go with you. Lead on."

The supposed priest was blindfolded and taken to the cave. He was ushered into the main cavern, the bandage removed from his eyes, and he was politely treated. A score or more of the robbers were passing the time in their usual manner near him, but they did not show him any disrespect, or in any way molest him. After a pause, a man approached him from one of the interior caves, and attracted his attention by bowing to him.

This man was Villaverde.

He proceeded to explain that he had fallen in love with a young lady, who did not look very favourably upon his suit, and that he had carried her off, and engaged the robber-chief to conceal both him and her for a few days, until she could be prevailed upon to marry him.

"I am not yet certain but that she will tell you a pitiful story, and implore you to save her," he added; "but you will, of course, in that case, inform her that she had better become my wife. I suppose you are a priest in good standing. What is your name?"

Mion handed Villaverde the papers placed at his service, and the villain glanced over them.

"I see—it's all right, padre Ragon," he said, as he returned the papers. "Step this way, if you please, and we will soon get through this matter."

He led the way into the private room of Maldonado, remarking that it had been placed at his disposal by the robber-chief, and inviting the supposed priest to be seated. Mion understood that the robbers had received instructions to obey Villaverde, and that he had ordered them to mind their own affairs.

As he was musing upon these things, and looking warily around, with his priestly hat and garments concealing his face and figure, Viva suddenly came from an adjoining cave, and threw herself at his feet, exclaiming:

"Oh, save me, good padre! save me!"

It is easy to understand the effect this appeal had upon Mion. As he looked upon her pale and sorrow-worn face, he could hardly restrain himself from throwing off his disguise, and seizing her tormentor by the throat.

"I have been brought here against my will, and cruelly treated," the captive continued. "This man wants me to marry him, and I finally consented to see you, but solely for the purpose of telling you my sad story. My name is Viva Torre; and—"

She was interrupted by Villaverde, who approached and seized her by the arm, and shook her.

"Enough of this," he said. "It is vain for you to whine. Look out upon the men in the other caves. They have all been placed at my orders. As to all that you may tell this man, you are only sealing his death-warrant unless you marry me. He will never be permitted to bear away any secrets with him that are not duly sealed by your marriage. Pause and reflect. Your own life and his are in the balance. Decide!"

He stepped to the door, and called up ten or a dozen of the robbers, and gave them instructions, in consequence of which they seized their weapons and ranged themselves before the door.

"You see that my will is law here, for the time being," Villaverde said. "It is folly and madness for you to longer resist my wishes, Viva. Decide on the instant!"

"Oh, save me, good padre!" was all the poor girl could say, by way of reply, as she clung to Mion's knees. "I will never marry this man, not even to save my life—never—never!"

These words produced such an excitement in the soul of our hero, under the circumstances, that it betrayed him to Viva. She suddenly started up, with an appalling cry of anxiety and terror.

Mion saw that she knew him!

"Decide!" exclaimed Villaverde, in a fury, again seizing her arm. "I will trifle no longer. Permit this priest to marry us on the instant, or—"

He suddenly broke off the menace, and stared earnestly at the supposed priest.

The agitation of both Viva and Mion had become so great that Villaverde readily detected its secret. Springing forward, he tore off the priestly garments. Mion had assumed, and the daring intruder stood revealed to his gaze!"

(To be continued.)

TRANSLANTING LARGE TREES.—The system of transplanting large trees has been practised in Paris during the past few years, to an extent unknown elsewhere. In spring and autumn the transplanting trucks or wheeled frames are to be seen in all directions, and the Champs Elysées, the Boulevards and the various squares recently laid out in many parts of the town, have been adorned with thousands of noble trees by these means. A report has been made on the subject to the Central Society of Horticulture, by which we are

informed that horse-chestnut trees, more than 39 inches in diameter, and a catalpa-tree, 150 years old, and 23 inches in diameter, have been transplanted with success. Another and very remarkable case is mentioned, namely, that of three good-sized trees growing in such manner that they could not be separated, having been removed together from a private garden about to be destroyed; the mass of roots and earth measuring about 16 feet in length. It has been discovered that the bleeding of trees, and the attacks of insects, after the cutting-off of branches, may be stopped by the simple method of brushing the part exposed with a paste made of wood-ashes and water; the ashes enter into the fibres of the wood, and prevent exudation, while the alkaline property of the mixture keeps off insects.

THE WILL AND THE WAY.

By J. F. SMITH, Esq.

Author of "The Jesuit," "The Prelate," "Minnigrey," &c.

CHAPTER XXX.

The dark shall be light,

The wrong made right,

And Bertram's might,

And Bertram's right,

Shall meet on Ellangowan's height

—*Guy Mannering.*

SCARCELY had the grey-eyed morning dawned on the hills and woody vale of Carrow, before the rumour spread, not only through the village, but from farm to farm, that another murder had been perpetrated at the abbey. Men gazed upon each other and asked what it could mean. A fatality seemed to hang over the time-honoured walls of the old mansion, doomed to witness such a succession of terrible events. No sooner did Farmer Ashton and his dame hear the intelligence than they set out at once; theirs was the agony and impatience of affection—they trembled lest their adopted son should have been the victim.

"He be safe, farmer—quite safe!" shouted Joe Beans, as he recognized the pony-chaise of his old master rattling at an unusual pace along the broad avenue. Master Harry be in the library with rector, Colonel Butler, and the gentlefolk—not a hair of his head has been hurt!"

An involuntary "thank God!" broke from the lips of the aged couple at the intelligence.

As Joe stated, our hero, after assuring himself, in a momentary interview with the duchess, of the state of Ellen and Lady Mowbray, had joined the party in the library: he found Colonel Mowbray laid upon the sofa, sinking fast, despair and death in every feature of his terror-stricken countenance. Martin, calm and resigned, had been propped, as he desired, upon pillows in the chair of his beloved master. No sooner did he perceive his young favourite, than he feebly extended his hand, and tried to smile. Mrs. Jarmy and the rest of the servants who were standing around, could not restrain their tears.

"It will soon be over, Harry!" murmured the old man faintly; "but something tells me that the aloe—you see I have not forgotten the name—will bloom yet!"

Our hero shook his head; his hopes of discovering the heir of his benefactor were buried in the grave of his friend Walter.

"Pray, Colonel Mowbray," said the rector, "reflect upon your dangerous state—make some atonement for the crimes you have committed—do not rush into the presence of your Maker with more crimes than those you have already committed upon your soul?"

"Is there no hope?" groaned the dying man.

The surgeons, who were standing near, assured him that there was none.

"Save me!" he said, frantically, "and I will tell everything—everything! Life—life! even at the price of infamy! I dare not die yet!"

When reluctantly convinced that his state was beyond the reach of human skill, the despairing wretch closed his eyes and maintained a dogged silence; no effort could induce him to speak.

"Hardened!" said the worthy clergyman, with a sigh—"hardened to the last! As he has lived, so will he die! May God forgive him!"

Scarcely a lip responded "amen" to the prayer, so thoroughly had his last murderous act disgusted the spectators with his crimes.

Poor Joe was like a distracted man: first consoling Susan, who had been seized with hysterics on hearing of her young lady's danger; then visiting poor Ralph in the temporary custody of the police; next called upon to answer the questions of the magistrates.

Not even at the death of Sir William had such confusion reigned throughout the Abbey of Carrow.

The door of the library opened, and, to the astonishment of all, the widow Lady Mowbray—notwithstanding the sufferings, both mental and bodily, which she had endured—entered the apartment, leaning on the arm of the Duchess of Devonshire. Although her cheek was deadly pale, and her whole frame so weak

that she could scarcely support herself, her maternal heart was strong: she came to make a last appeal to her enemy, to give her some clue to her abandoned son.

"Walter," she said, "like you I am dying: in a few hours, perhaps, we shall both stand before the judgment-seat! Something tells me that to you I owe the misery of my life—to my dishonour in the eyes of the world—the loss of my dear husband's love—of my poor boy! Be generous—let me embrace the image of his father ere I die, and at the bar of Heaven my prayer shall be for mercy for your crimes?"

A sneer curled the lips of Colonel Mowbray: although dying, his heart was not touched by her appeal.

"Man!" she exclaimed, sinking on her knees by the side of the sofa; "if you are human, feel for a mother's agony! It is no small bribe I offer: forgiveness of wrongs like mine! I have been driven from my home—outrage has made me steep my hands in blood!—cruelty drives me mad—do you mark me, mad? My youth a blank—my age a withered, childless solitude! One word!"

"Never!" muttered the wretched man, with a look of fiend-like malice; "the only consolation I have left is in that my death will destroy the last hope of your existence!"

"Monster!" exclaimed a deep voice near him.

"Whose voice was that? Who spoke?"

With a painful effort, Colonel Mowbray turned his head upon the pillow, and encountered the indignant glance of Henry Ashton.

The distracted widow grasped the hand of her persecutor, and, in the most pathetic accents, conjured him to relent. But all was useless. The sight of her tears and agony seemed an alleviation to his pang.

"You know what it is now to suffer!" he gasped. "Ha! the secret dies with me! You shall not even have the satisfaction of knowing whether your brat lives, or rots, like his father in the grave! I loved you once," he added; "but, woman-like, you preferred the rich brother to the poor one!"

"Have you no heart?" said the rector.

"None that your sophistry can touch! I have no faith in repentance and the lies which you churchmen preach! You are right!" added the assassin, glaring on his crushed and broken-hearted victim. "The whisperings of your fancy did not deceive you! I incited the fool Lucas to believe you loved him—planned with him the scheme which lured you to your ruin! I would have seen you a dishonoured, guilty, creeping thing! That failed!" he continued, moodily; "but at least I leave you a childless one!"

"God restrain me!" exclaimed our hero, transported beyond control at the dastardly triumph of the speaker. "I shall forget the debt of friendship due to the memory of Walter, and strike the villain dead!"

"Base-born cur!" muttered the dying man.

"Who says that Henry Ashton is base-born?" demanded a tall, gentlemanly-looking personage, who had just entered the library with Colonel Butler, who had been engaged in another apartment, taking the depositions of Joe Beans and Ralph.

It was the Khan; but his appearance was so changed that, but for his voice, even his own brother, who was present, would not have recognised him. He no longer wore the dark beard which hitherto had covered half his face, and his semi-Oriental costume was discarded.

Colonel Mowbray started, and his eyes became fixed with a look of malice and impotent rage upon the speaker.

"Philip," said the farmer, extending his hand to him, "that be right! Tell the proud man that Harry be no base-born cur, but the son of an honest man! I always said theoer war wedded, like dame and I, to his mother!"

"Philip Ashton! It is Philip Ashton!" murmured old Martin. "Thank God, it will be clear at last!"

"Lady," said the Khan—for so we shall continue to call him—addressing the widow of Sir William with profound respect, "Fear not! Whatever the resolution of that bold, bad man, his malice will be impotent to harm your peace! Your son yet lives!"

A cry of joy broke from the very heart of the long-suffering mother.

"And will be found worthy of your love."

"Your oath—your oath!" exclaimed Colonel Mowbray, furiously.

"Binds me only whilst you live!" calmly observed the Khan. "Fear not—it shall be kept: a few moments more or less will matter little! If the flends can wait, so can this injured lady!"

The bitterness of the retort inflicted an additional pang upon the dying man, who would have given worlds but for a few minutes of his former strength, that he might grapple with the speaker, and bury his secret with him in the grave.

"Lift me up, Harry!" said Martin, lightly grasping his hand, "and do not leave me! My eyes grow dim—I would look upon you till the last! Give me some cordial. I must—I will not die," he added, with energy, "till after that bad man! It will bloom yet, boy—the old also will put forth its long-promised flower at last!"

"What mean you?" exclaimed our hero, bewildered with the strange hopes and imaginings which crowded upon his brain; "do I dream?"

"All will be clear soon. I told you it would."

The aged groom swallowed the cordial which Mrs. Jarmy held to his lips, his eyes all the while fixed with an expression of intense earnestness upon the countenance of Colonel Mowbray, who was sinking fast.

"Keep me up!" he kept repeating—"keep me up! I shall outlast him yet! For my dear master's sake, Heaven will give me strength—I feel it will."

It was a moment of anxious expectation to all. The assassin gradually sinking, and yet from time to time making furious efforts to rally his departing strength; the Khan calm and observant, standing at the foot of the sofa, regarding him.

Lady Mowbray half-fainting from excitement, was seated at the opposite end of the room, facing Martin. Occasionally her glance encountered that of Henry Ashton, and her widowed heart beat with newly-awakened emotions.

"Should it be!" she whispered to the duchess; "should it be so?"

Her sympathising friend pressed her hand in silence.

The death-struggle, preceded by the rattle in the throat, relieved them at length from their long agony of suspense. Colonel Mowbray expired: the last words upon his lips, a curse—his last look, one of mingled defiance and hatred.

"Dead!" said the surgeon; "gone to his account at last!"

At the words, Martin pressed the hand of our hero yet more firmly.

"I knew I should outlive the rascal—I felt I should!" he said; "all will now be bright and clear at last!"

CHAPTER CXXXI

Hear me for my cause! and be silent, that
You may hear me. *Shakespeare.*

No sooner had the death-rattle ceased in the throat of the guilty Colonel Mowbray, and the surgeons pronounced him dead, than the eyes of Martin, who had been gradually sinking, re-kindled, as though he had received from some pitying angel, who had listened to the long prayer of his existence, a fresh lease of life. Raising himself, without the assistance of Joe Beans, who for the last hour had been watching him in his chair, he exclaimed, in a distinct tone:

"Philip Ashton, in the name of God speak out! The persecutor is no more, and the hour has come!"

All eyes were turned towards the Khan, whose countenance was calm and impassible as ever, with intense expectation and anxiety. Every one present felt they were about to listen to a strange tale, and a still stranger *dénouement*.

"Perhaps," observed the Duchess of Devonshire, who saw how painfully Lady Mowbray was agitated, "the explanation had better be deferred! This fearful excitement will destroy her!"

"No—no!" murmured the old groom. "I am dying! Now—now let me fulfil my trust! Then, when I meet my noble master in a better world, he may smile upon me, and say, the confidence he reposed in the man who ate his bread has not been broken. Now—now!"

"Right!" said the long-suffering widow, whose heart anticipated that its dearest wish would at last be gratified. "Fear not, dear friend! Joy will not kill me; and I am proof against fresh sorrow!"

"Philip," added his brother, who, with his weeping eye, forebode the blow which was about to be inflicted on the long-cherished hopes and feelings of years, "if thee knowest anything about that bad man, or the poor lady's child, speak at once, for the credit of thee name, and thee dead father's memory!"

Thus adjured on all sides, the renegade commenced his explanation. Every word which fell from his lips was received with greedy ears by the party in the library, who, in their various groupings, would have formed no bad study for a painter: Lady Mowbray, supported on either side by the duchess and Ellen; Martin, his withered hand grasping that of our hero, dying in the chair of his loved master; the body of the colonel, whose countenance, even in death, bore traces of the evil passions which destroyed him, stretched upon a sofa directly under the window, through which the morning sun was brightly streaming; Dr. Orme and the magistrate surrounding the Khan, and the old domestics of the family peering anxiously in at the door of the apartment, from whose panelled walls the portraits of the Mowbrays, for many generations, seemed to preside over the fortunes of their race.

"My justification," commenced the Khan, in his usual calm, unbroken tone, "must accompany my explanation! The old gravestones in the churchyard of Carrow would reproach me, if I permitted a stain to rest on the name of Ashton through any act of mine. I address myself to those," he added—"to those who can both understand and sympathise with the yeoman's honest pride and fidelity to the lords of the land whose soil we have tilled for centuries!"

"This delay is agony!" murmured Lady Mowbray, whose eyes, during the last few minutes, had never wandered from the manly features of Henry, whose countenance was alternately agitated by doubt and hope.

"It is known that, unsuited for the peaceful toil of my forefathers," resumed Philip Ashton, "at the early age of sixteen I became a soldier, and enlisted in the regiment commanded by that bold, bad man whose death we have just witnessed. For years I served my country with courage, both in the burning clime of India and in other lands. Our regiment suffered severely at Assaye, where I distinguished myself in saving the life of my superior officer. Soon afterwards we were ordered home to England. Our quarters were near to London. Little is known, beyond military circles, of the sufferings of the soldier," he added; "for a slight breach of discipline, I was condemned to the lash—to be tied up, like a hound, in the gaze of my fellow-men, and flogged! It was not the pain of the lash I feared; it was the disgrace! One man alone could save me from the agony of such a shame! That man was Colonel Mowbray! He sought me in my prison; and as the price of his mercy, proposed that I should exile myself to India, taking with me a child, which was to bear my name, and pass for mine."

All eyes became riveted upon Lady Mowbray and our hero, whose agitation became fearful.

"I consented," resumed the narrator—"gladly consented—for in India, my old schoolfellow and companion, Musgrave, the father of Meera Hafaz, had married a begum, or native princess, and was in a position to protect me and advance my fortunes."

"The child! my child!" exclaimed Lady Mowbray. "Your heart, madam, I perceive, has already divined my secret! A few moments more, and your hopes will be confirmed! The fiend to whom I pledged myself, by an oath too terrible to repeat—bound me never to disclose the transaction whilst he lived! Two days before the vessel was to sail, I encountered the man who had brought the infant from Italy to England. From him I learnt that it was the colonel's own nephew—his brother's son—the hair of Carrow! What was I to do? My lips fettered by an oath I dared not break, and still within the power of the colonel, who, instead of procuring my pardon—which he could easily have done—connived at my escape! Still I resolved the child should not be exposed to the perils of the voyage—the hazards of a wandering life like mine! I bore him to Carrow, to my brother's farm; told him of a tale of a pretended marriage, and the loss of my wife! He believed me, received the boy, and saved him a—"

A shriek, such as escapes from the heart when relieved from the agony of years, broke from the lips of Lady Mowbray, whose arms involuntarily stretched towards our hero.

"Mother!" he exclaimed.

"My boy! my boy! Here, to this broken heart!"

The next instant they were folded in the fond embrace of filial and maternal love. Oh, the gushing tenderness of that embrace! The long-suffering woman gazed upon him with unutterable pride and fondness, parted the clustering curls from his flushed brow, and imprinted there a mother's holiest kiss—the seal of nature's right—then, overcome with the intensity of happiness, sank fainting in the arms of those around her.

Sir William Mowbray—for so, for the future, we must call our hero—could have knelt and worshipped her. For years his heart had yearned for the blessing of a mother's love—and the wish was gratified at last. The discovery which gave him a name and fortune, was far less precious than the recovery of a parent whom he could honour as well as love.

"Mother!" he exclaimed, and it was the second time his lips had pronounced the endearing name; "angel of innocence—martyr! Look up and bless your son—bless him but with a look, and he is happy!"

The word—the piercing accent of his voice—awoke the long-slumbering echoes of her heart. Lady Mowbray half-unclosed her quivering eye-lids, and pronounced the name of William—his father's name: how proud and happy he felt. The happiness of a whole life was concentrated in that moment.

Old Martin, whose greedy ears drank in every word, murmured a few indistinct words of thanksgiving: he felt that he should accomplish his task, and fulfil the sacred trust his master had reposed in him. Scarcely an eye in the room but was dimmed with tears. The rector was on his knees in silent prayer, and poor Joe Beans was endeavouring to choke the sobs of joy which would rise in his throat at the discovery which placed a yet greater distance between himself and the friend of his youthful days; whilst Dame Ashton and her husband sat gazing in silent but not selfish sorrow: the sight that they had lost a son.

"Could my dear uncle but have known this," thought Ellen, "how would his noble heart have rejoiced! Perhaps from his sphere of bliss he sees and blessed him!"

The Duchess of Devonshire was the first to recover her self-possession. She saw that further excitement

might prove fatal to the exhausted frame of Lady Mowbray, and firmly but gently insisted on her being removed at once to her apartment. Henry—shaw! the fellow has so wormed himself into our heart, we can scarcely bring ourselves to call him by his proper name—Sir William, we mean, would permit no other arms than his to assist his new-found parent: raising her tenderly as a mother would her sleeping child, he carried her from the library to her chamber. Not even the entreaties of Ellen and the duchess could prevail on him to leave the room till he had seen her once more open her tear-gemmed eyes, and heard her lips pronounce the name of "son."

"Ellen—dear Ellen!" he whispered to his cousin, as the fair girl gently led him from the room; "next to the joy I feel at the discovery of such a parent, my greatest happiness is that you will not have to blush in the eyes of the world for the choice you have made! Worthy of you," he added, at the same time imprinting a kiss upon her brow, "I can never prove; but this event lessens the measure of my undeservings!"

"To me," replied the blushing girl, "Sir William Mowbray will be no dearer than Henry Ashton!"

No sooner had our hero and the ladies withdrawn from the library, than all joined in commanding the prudence of the Khan, who further explained to them that since his return to England he had succeeded in discovering the party who brought the infant heir of Carrow from Italy, and delivered him to Colonel Mowbray.

"That will lessen the difficulty of establishing our young friend's rights," observed Colonel Butler; "but, unfortunately, the law will require something more where such large possessions are at stake—some further proof!"

"Which I and Mrs. Page can furnish!" said the aged housekeeper.

"You?" repeated the rector, with surprise.

"Yes!" continued the faithful domestic; "I and Mrs. Page, who was lady's-maid in the family, were present when my master's son was born. Dr. Martinneau, who attended my lady, pointed out to us a singular mark upon the left breast of the infant!"

"A mark?"

"Was it something like a strawberry-leaf?" eagerly demanded Dame Ashton.

"As like as if it had been painted!" replied Mrs. Jarmy, with surprise.

"There will be no difficulty, then," said the farmer's wife, mournfully; "for Harry—I forgot, I mustn't call him Harry," she added, correcting herself, and at the same time bursting into a flood of tears, "has the mark: I have seen it when he was a child a thousand times!"

"What beast thee crying for, dame?" said the honest farmer, drawing his hand across his eyes to efface the traces of a weakness of which he felt ashamed. "Thee ought to be glad—glad, I tell thee!"

"Glad! glad when we have lost a son?" answered his wife, reproachfully. "What be the use of all thee toil and saving now? Har—Sir William I mean, he won't want it—he'll forget us now—let us go home!"

"That beant true, Missus," blubbered Joe Beans, "and then know'st it beant! Master Harry—I can't call him anything else yet—wouldn't forget a dog he had once been fond of: why he won't pass even me without a kind word or a smile, tho' he has come to be lord of the manor, and great, and rich—much less those who have reared and loved him!"

"Could he," said the rector, laying his hand upon the shoulder of the speaker, "I should despise as much as I have loved him!"

There is nothing so sensitive as affection, jealous of its rights; Dame Ashton would not be convinced, simply because that word was not spoken by the lips of our hero: she insisted upon returning to the farm; and, accompanied by her husband, had just reached the great hall as Sir William crossed it, on his return from the chamber of Lady Mowbray.

"Matthew—doff thee hat!" she said, in a loud whisper; "here be—be—"

She could not say Sir William—the words stuck in her throat; the pride of the affectionate creature gave way, and she sobbed audibly.

None knew her nature, temper, strength and weakness, better than the child she had reared. Our hero read in an instant the struggle passing in her mind. Throwing his arms around her, with the familiarity of his boyish years, he kissed her wrinkled cheeks.

"Dame—dame," he said, "you would not render your poor boy miserable, by letting him see that this discovery makes you unhappy! Mowbray or Ashton, what does it signify? I shall not love you and farmer less. After my own dear angel mother," he added, "you will always hold the first place in my heart!"

If the speaker did not include Ellen in the reservation, it was, perhaps, that his love for the fair girl surpassed all other love.

"I told thee, dame," exclaimed the farmer, grasping him by the hand, "that thee wor unjust! tho' he be rich and great, he won't forget us!"

"Never!"

"Or love us less?"

"More I cannot," replied our hero, returning the pressure of the old man's hand. "I repeat it—I must ever consider you and your wife as my second parents, and respect and honour you as such!"

"My dear boy," said the rector, entering the hall hastily from the library, "old Martin is most impatient to see you! the surgeons say that he has not an hour to live! He has a solemn trust to discharge before he dies!"

"A trust?" repeated Sir William.

"Yes!" added the rector, solemnly; "from your dead father!"

"I follow you instantly—instantly! You hear?" he added, turning to the farmer and his wife, "I am summoned in a name it would be sacrilege to disregard!"

So saying, he followed the rector to the library.

"He be our own boy in heart, though not in blood!" exclaimed the dame, looking after him with a glance of gratified affection. "How prettily he did speak! didn't he, Matthew?"

"That he did!" replied her husband. "I knew all the time that his heart wor in the right place! He is worthy of his good fortune."

"But he won't owe it to us!" observed his wife, regretfully.

"No matter who he owes it to," answered the honest farmer; "he deserves it! Come along!" he added; "if our fire-side be at times a bit lonely, we shall know that he is happy, and that will be enough!"

"Didn't I tell thee so!" said Joe Beans, who had overheard the last observation of his former master.

"Thee didst, lad—thee didst!"

"Why, he shook me by the hand as he passed me just now in the library, afore all the gentry. His heart be all gold! there beant a bit of pride in it! But I mun be off!"

The aged couple demanded where Joe was compelled to be off to. The praise of our hero was so grateful to them, they would willingly have detained him to listen to it.

"I must go and see poor Ralph," replied the young man, "who be frightened out of his wits, I dare say. Police have got him!"

"Got him! what for?"

"Doesn't 'ee know, mun? Why, for shooting the colonel! I wish he had shot him before he had hit poor Martin!" added the rustic. "Poor old man! he be a sinking fast!"

The farmer and his wife both expressed the utmost indignation that Red Ralph should be in custody, even for a moment, for shooting such a villain; and the farmer declared that he would bail the boy for a thousand pounds, if necessary.

"For two thousand, Matthew!" said the dame; "for two! Tell him so, Joe! tell him so from me! Pretty justice, indeed!"

Joe promised that he would, and left them to console the prisoner, whom he found down-hearted enough—terrified at what he had done—in the butler's room, in charge of the village constable, and one of the city officers.

"Eh, Mister Beans!" said Ralph, his countenance brightening as soon as he saw him. "Thee beest come at last! This be more than I bargained for, I reckon!"

He held up his wrists, and showed the handcuffs which the officers had placed upon him.

"No matter!" replied his patron; "it won't be for long!"

"That's what Will Sideler said," observed the boy, ruefully, "when they took him at Cromwell House; but they hung 'un, for all that!"

"Don't thee be afraid! They won't hang thee!"

"I don't know that!" answered the boy, dolefully. "This be a mortal queer world! But I don't care!" he added; "he killed 'old man, and wor it to do agin, I'd do it! If I hadn't ha'done it, he might ha' killed thee!"

Joe was touched by the simple expression of Ralph's gratitude and attachment to him; and Susan, who was present, felt so grateful, that she absolutely threw her arms round his neck, and kissed the red-haired little monster, as she used to call him.

"Can't ye take those things off his hands?" said Joe, addressing the officer of justice. "I'll be his bail he won't run away! Will thee, Ralph?"

"Not if thee tell I to stop!" answered the boy.

This was a request that neither the constable nor his colleague thought proper to accede to, till Colonel Butler and the rector entered the room, and instantly directed that they should be taken off. Being magistrates, there was no further difficulty.

"Don't be alarmed, my little man," said the former, patting him on the head; "instead of being punished for what you have done, you shall be rewarded! You have nothing to fear!"

"I told 'ee so, Ralph!" whispered Joe; "I told 'ee so!"

"The case," added Colonel Butler, "is clearly one of justifiable homicide. The most you will have to endure is a day or two's detention until the inquest is over; and even that can be avoided if you can procure bail."

"What be that?" demanded the prisoner, gradually getting more and more at his ease. "I ain't got any, that I know on!"

His rustic friend remembered the offer of Farmer Ashton, who had not yet left the abbey: he not only readily became security for Ralph's appearance before the coroner—which, after all, was a mere form—but induced a friend—a substantial yeoman on the estate—to join him.

The bail bond signed, Red Ralph was restored to liberty.

CHAPTER CXXXII

DIRECTLY our hero entered the library, after the summons of the rector, he advanced towards the chair in which Martin sat, or rather reclined, propped by pillows. The countenance of the old man was pale, as death had already passed his icy hand over its lines—ments, and his eyes were nearly closed, but they opened again and flashed with intelligence at the sound of his young master's voice whilst a smile of satisfaction played faintly as an expiring flame upon his quivering lips, to which he made several attempts to raise the hand extended to him.

"Forgive me!" he said; "forgive me that I summoned you from the presence of those you love; but it was your father's voice—not mine—not mine! I dared not disobey his commands!"

"Had it been otherwise," replied Sir William, "your slightest wish would have been law to me. Deep as my regret is at losing you, my true and faithful friend, it is doubled by the feeling that my debt of gratitude is still unpaid!"

"Gratitude!" repeated the aged groom, somewhat testily; "no—no! You owe no gratitude to me! For many a long year I ate your father's bread in idleness—but he was good, and would not have suffered a worn-out hound to starve that had served him faithfully; you owe me no gratitude!"

"You must be brief!" whispered the surgeon to the baronet; "his collection is failing him."

"No it ain't!" exclaimed the old man, sharply; "it can't fail me, till I can no longer serve Sir William's son. Let me look on him," he added; "pray let me see him, the room grows very dark, or else my eyes are dim!"

He closed them for a few moments, as if to collect both memory and strength, then fixed them upon our hero with an expression of intense fidelity and love.

"It is my master's son!" he exclaimed; "but you have neither the title-deeds of his estates, the plate, nor precious heir-looms of your house!"

"They are lost!" observed Lawyer Elworthy, who was standing near the chair.

"So people think," said the dying man, with a chuckle; "but they are mistaken; Martin has them: parchments—diamonds—gold—all safe—all safe! Sir William did not confide them to the lawyer, or the parson—no—no! he knew better; he trusted them to the fidelity of—the old—house-dog—Martin—Martin—the groom! They are safe!" he added, grasping the hand of the heir; "not one missing—all for you—all for you!"

So exhausted was the speaker by the effort he had made, that for several moments all present thought him dead—for he had fallen back upon his pillow in a state of insensibility, from which, probably, he would not have recovered, but for the skill of the Khan, whose studies, both in the East and with Dr. Guyot, had made him master of many curious secrets, both in medicine and surgery.

Calling hastily for a glass of water, he poured into it the contents of a small phial, which tinged the pure element with a bright opal colour, and held it to the lips of the groom: the very odour seemed to revive him. No sooner had the liquid passed his lips, than Martin became suddenly invigorated.

"I am strong now!" he said, in a firm tone; "strong—strong! How long will it last?"

"For an hour, perhaps," replied the renegade; "and then—then—"

"I understand," interrupted the old man, unmoved at the announcement; "that is as it should be! Why should the watch-dog live after his watch is ended? Let all but Sir William Mowbray," he added, in a loud voice, "quit the room!"

It is needless to add that a command, even from a groaner, under such circumstances, was instantly obeyed.

"Lock the door!" he whispered to our hero, as soon as they were alone.

The baronet did as he was directed.

Drawing the key or instrument which raised the entrance to the secret recess or chamber from his bosom, Martin instructed his young master how to use it.

"Descend!" he said; "you will find them all there—not a seal broken! The deeds—without which your wretched uncle could not have sold or mortgaged a single acre of the broad lands of Carrow—the diamonds, plate, all—all!"

"But I cannot leave you, Martin, at such a moment!"

observed Sir William, fearful that the momentary strength of the faithful domestic might fail him.

"The deeds—the parchments!" repeated the dying man; "let me see them! before I die! See them in your hands—for to your hands alone I promised to give them! do not deny old Martin's last request!"

Thus adjured, it was impossible to resist: with a trembling hand, Sir William applied the key to the artfully contrived opening—it refused to turn.

"To the left—the lid!" said Martin, who continued intently watching him.

It turned, disclosing the entrance.

"The packet directed to his son, to be read only by him," continued the speaker, "lies on the lid of the casket containing the papers: secure that—let me see that!"

Our hero hastily descended, and in a few moments returned with it in his hands: impatient as he felt to open it—to read the last lines traced by the pen of the parent whom he had loved and honoured as his benefactor and friend—he restrained the impulse, and hastened to the side of his faithful guardian, in whom, brief as had been his absence, he perceived a change.

The potion of the Khan was beginning to lose its virtue; life was fast fleeing from him.

"Martin," said our hero, pressing his hand, "is there nothing I can do for you to mark my gratitude? Have you no wish—no request?"

"Yes! one—one!"

"Name it?"

"Bury me," faltered the old groom, "in sight of the Mowbray vault, near to my dear—dear master! I once thought," he added, "that I should like to have been earthed in the stable; but it was a wrong wish, perhaps, and might only frighten the grooms and helpers—that old Martin would do them any harm!"

"You shall be buried in the vault of the Mowbrays!" replied the baronet; "in the midst of the race you have so long and faithfully served!"

"No—no!" exclaimed the dying man, with a faint smile; "near to the vault! The house-dog should lie at the door—the door! You are sure," he added, looking earnestly into the eyes of the young heir, "that the coffin is safe?"

"Quite safe, Martin."

"And you will not forget the way to the secret chamber? Remember the—key—turns to the—left—the left!"

The difficulty with which he pronounced the last few words indicated that his end was fast approaching. Sir William Mowbray rose from his knees by the side of the chair, and, unlocking the door of the library, beckoned to the rector to enter, that he might perform the office of his ministry.

Dr. Orme commenced, with the fervour of true piety, the service for the dying. The aged groom listened with evident pleasure to his words, but from time to time opened his half-closed eyes to take one more look at the son of his old master. At the end of the prayer he attempted to raise himself from the pillow, but was too feeble.

The rector and our hero both assisted him.

"He is trying to speak!" whispered the former.

Sir William inclined his head to catch the last words of the old man.

"Take care of the *cheréal* saddle and the horse-cloth!" he said, alluding to the trappings of the famous steed, the traditional pride of the Mowbray stables.

"They shall be cared for, for your sake, Martin!"

"God bless you! you will not forget me?" said the grey-haired servitor.

"Never—never!"

"What," added the old man, with a faint smile, "did you say was the name of the plant—you know—the unsightly, prickly plant, which blooms but once in a hundred years—we spoke of it—together?"

"The aloe, Martin—the aloe!" replied Sir William, with difficulty repressing his tears.

"Ah!" nodded the groom, I—remember! I told you it would bloom at last—it has! Old Martin has paid his debt of gratitude, and can meet his master with a smile—a smile!"

These were the last words his tongue could falter. With a gentle sigh, he fell back upon the pillow and expired, his fading eyes fixed to the last upon the heir of the race he had so long and faithfully served.

The baronet laid his hand upon the eyelids of the dead, and gently closed them: he felt he could do no less for such a friend and servitor. The last duty paid, he followed the rector from the library.

In the solitude of his own chamber our hero broke the seal of the packet which contained the last writing of his father: of that father whom he had loved and honoured as a benefactor and friend—whose virtues he had venerated—whose memory was so dear to him.

It contained the outpourings of a noble, bruised heart, addressed to the son he had so long and deeply mourned; filled with advice drawn from the noblest principles, such as experience might give to age; and recommended his unknown heir to emulate the virtues of Henry Ashton, whose friendship he particularly wished him to cultivate.

"Resemble my pupil and friend," it continued, "in honour, integrity, and truth, and you will be all a father's heart could wish—all his instructions would have trained you to!"

With deep emotion Sir William perused the lines so grateful to his feelings—so precious to his heart: they were the seal upon his happiness, and consoled him even for the loss of such a parent.

"Heaven grant," he murmured, "that I prove worthy of the name bequeathed by so good a man! To add to its lustre is impossible—my care must be not to disgrace it!"

At a very early hour the following day, an inquest was held at the abbey, upon the bodies of Colonel Mowbray and the faithful Martin. There was no hesitation in returning the verdict—the evidence was so clear. In the case of the colonel, it was, as every one anticipated, justifiable homicide. In that of the latter, wilful murder: so that even if the uncle of our hero had escaped the shot of Red Ralph, he would have had to answer at the tribunal of his country for the death of the aged gro.

Ralph's joy on being informed by Joe Beans of the result of the inquest, manifested itself in the usual series of leaps and gyrations: he wanted to shake hands with every one, danced and sang in his uncouth way, and cut a thousand antics.

From a feeling of propriety he was removed from the abbey to the Home Farm, with an intimation from the baronet that he would be provided for. Under the roof of Farmer Ashton he was in his element: the hero of his own tale, which he was compelled to repeat at the arrival of every fresh visitor—the tenants of the estate and the neighbouring yeomen crowding to the farm to learn the real history of what had passed at the abbey. Matthew Ashton said little, but his loquacious dame amply satisfied them.

The body of Colonel Mowbray was interred at midnight, in a retired corner of the churchyard; no stone even marked the spot: both our hero and the rector felt that it would be sacrilege to lay him by his brother, whose happiness had so cruelly blighted—whose untimely death they more than suspected he had been privy to. The space he should have occupied in the family vault of his ancestors was destined for the faithful Martin, whom the baronet persisted in his intention of burying by the side of his master.

"That is as it should be, my dear boy!" said Dr. Orme, with an approving smile, when he heard the decision of his pupil: "his sufferings and fidelity deserve even so great an honour; not a tenant on the estate but will follow him, I feel convinced."

"I shall follow him myself!" added Sir William; "it will be the last token of respect and gratitude I can pay to poor old Martin!"

Never had the church of Carrow been so crowded as on the day of the old man's funeral: the farmers for miles round made a point of being present, to honour his memory. Sir William Mowbray followed as chief mourner—Joe Beans and Matthew Ashton next. The procession was headed by the rector in full canonicals, who walked at the head of the corpse. Every head was uncovered as it passed.

Instead of taking his seat, as every one expected, in the Mowbray gallery, over which the escutcheons of the late baronet were suspended, his son entered the pew of Farmer Ashton, in the centre of the aisle—kneel and pray in the same place he had been accustomed to kneel and pray in when a child: which simple circumstance pleased the people more than even his following one of their own class to the grave.

The sublime words of the funeral service were ended, and the coffin deposited in its last resting-place, by the side of the murdered baronet. Instead of retiring with the mourners, Sir William remained till the church was closed, and then descended alone to the vault, to pray by the ashes of his father.

At the expiration of an hour he left the sacred edifice, and found, on his appearance in the churchyard, the tenantry drawn up in lines for him to pass through. Raising his hat to thank them, he passed quickly on, accompanied by Dr. Orme, till he reached the little gate communicating with the park, where he saw Farmer Ashton and his dame waiting to see him pass, and Joe Beans with Red Ralph standing in the background—the latter grinning and nodding with delight.

Casting a friendly smile towards Joe, the baronet drew the arm of the gratified dame within his, just as he used to do when a boy, and walked with her and the farmer towards the abbey.

"God bless him!" exclaimed Joe, emphatically;

"he ain't a bit of pride about him—he be more kind than ever!"

"That he is!" said old Chettleborough, who was standing near; "if poor old Martin could only know how he has been honoured—in the baronet's own vault—well, he deserved it! Honesty, after all, Joe, be the best policy, both for this world and the next!"

"So it be," said the young man, heartily; "and I only wish I may live to serve him as faithfully as poor old Martin served his father!"

Red Ralph said nothing, but the lesson was not

thrown away upon him. After the first excitement had worn away, the boy was observed at times to be sad and thoughtful—the seeds of good were sown. True, the soil was rugged, and had been little cultivated, but they only required time and a genial sun to germinate.

Although Lady Mowbray had suffered deeply from the wrongs and arrows of the world, the recovery of her son seemed to infuse fresh life into her sinking frame. As she gazed upon our hero, a gleam something like the sunshine of her youth returned.

It is needless to say that Ellen and her cousin were happy in the prospect before them, which dawned at last, bright and unclouded as their own pure, youthful hearts.

Although there was no collateral branch to dispute the claims of Sir William, yet it was deemed most prudent by his advisers to prove his right to the title and estates of his father by a solemn form of law—for which purpose a friendly suit was commenced against the executors, to compel them to resign their trust. During its progress it became necessary for the party once more to return to London.

"It is our last trial;" whispered our hero to Ellen, as he handed her into the carriage, in the dickey of which Joe Beans and Susan were already seated; "when next we revisit Carrow, it will be for the completion of our happiness—the realisation of those fond wishes which once appeared so dark and hopeless."

The orphan replied only by a blush; she knew that he alluded to their marriage.

In order to avoid any manifestation which might be painful to his mother, Sir William had given orders that the hour of his departure should be kept secret; but somehow it transpired, and as the carriages dashed through the park gates, a hearty cheer broke from a group assembled on the common—Red Ralph was at the head of them.

"Hang that boy!" exclaimed Joe Beans, with an air of vexation, "he is always in some mischief or another."

"Not always, Joe," observed Susan, in a gentle tone, which recalled her lover to himself; "besides, he is very grateful."

"Good bye, Mister Beans!" shouted the boy; "if this goes to Mortlake, g' my respects to the rats at Cromwell House."

It was impossible to be angry. Joe waved his hand in sign of adieu, as the carriage disappeared over the common.

(To be continued.)

THE DIVORCE COURT.

SIR CRESSWELL CRESSWELL's temporary infraction will produce the same kind of choking domestic distress that would be experienced if St. George's, Hanover Square, were to be shut up in order to undergo thorough repair, and if it were the English law that nobody could, under any circumstances, lawfully be married elsewhere. When anybody is going to be married, the slightest delay always seems intolerable. It is exactly the same thing when people are going to be separated. The law and Sir Cresswell Cresswell in such a case can hardly separate them quickly enough.

There are two things that always try the patience of the most robust and practised Christian philosopher. The first is, at the beginning of a railway journey, when he has to walk up and down the station waiting for the arrival of the train. The second is, at the end of a railway journey, when the other passengers in the carriage persist in getting out of the train before him, and he is kept until the very last. Human nature cannot stand these long and aggravated delays, during which every minute seems a half-hour, and every half-hour a month. It is very much the same when he is delayed at the matrimonial railway station, either at the beginning or close of his journey.

The disabling of the learned judge creates the same universal dismay and embarrassment—though, of course, upon a larger and more important scale—that would result if on the arrival of the Scottish mail all the carriage-doors were discovered to be locked, and all the railway officials had gone home to luncheon. During the next four months all persecuted husbands and wives are as badly off as if the Archbishop of Canterbury had laid the kingdom under an interdict, and forbidden the use of the marriage service. Any husband in this happy period of immunity and license may pull his wife's hair in safety. Nothing can be done to him in vacation time. He has an fair an excuse for toasting the carriage pole that ran into Sir Cresswell Cresswell's horse as the Jacobites had for toasting the mob that upset William III.

At the time of the institution of the Divorce Court opinions ran very high on either side of the disputed question whether or no its institution was desirable. Society will now have a little time to reflect whether or no it could do without Sir Cresswell Cresswell. It is certain that without him we should hardly recognize the daily newspapers. The number of sensation trials would be grievously thinned, and we should no longer have those numerous revelations of domestic history,

the perusal of which forms so melancholy a part of the business of the day.

[The ink with which the foregoing remarks were traced was scarcely dry when the announcement of the demise of the lewd and estimable judge came upon the public ear with mingled feelings of surprise and regret. By the comparatively sudden death of Sir Cresswell Cresswell, the country has been deprived of one of its ablest and most conscientious judges, and the circumstances under which the loss has been inflicted upon the country add pain to the regrets which such an event would at any time have given birth to. In the full possession of one of those acute intellects with which nature rarely endows men, the late judge was stricken down by an accident as sudden as unforeseen. When riding home from the discharge of his functions in the court over which he presided, on Friday, the seventeenth of July, he came in collision with a pair of carriage-horses which had run away, and was thrown heavily to the ground. It was at first thought he had not sustained any serious injury, but the shock to the system at his advanced age, in connection with unsuspected heart disease, proved fatal, and under the effect of it he has sunk into the tomb.

The deceased judge was born in 1794, and was educated at the Charter House, from whence he was removed to Emmanuel College, Cambridge, and called to the bar at the Middle Temple in 1819. Having won for himself the rank of King's Counsel in 1834, and led the Northern Circuit with an ability which acquired him high reputation, Mr. Cresswell was, in 1837, elected to the House of Commons as member for Liverpool. He continued to represent that great commercial community till 1842, when, by the Government of Sir Robert Peel, he was appointed one of the Justices of the Common Pleas, and invested with the rank of knight hood. Since his elevation to the bench, Mr. Justice Cresswell has given signal proof of his acumen, his acuteness, and his quick wit. He was the fourth son of Francis Easterby, Esq., of Blackheath, who, on marrying an heiress of John Cresswell, Esq., of Cresswell, took the surname of that ancient Northumbrian family.

In the year 1858, after the passing of the bill abolishing the old Ecclesiastical Courts of Doctors' Commons, with regard to probate of wills, divorce, and matrimonial causes, and substituting a special and exclusive jurisdiction for those cases, Sir Cresswell Cresswell was appointed by Lord Cranworth as the most fitting person on the judicial bench to fill the office of Judge Ordinary of that court, and by a special Act he took rank and precedence next to the Lord Chief Baron.]

NEW ZEALAND SEA-WEED.—A new speculation has recently been entered on by a house in the city, viz., importing sea-weed of a particular character into this country for bed-stuffing. The material, when dried in the sun, is lighter than any other vegetable of a marine description. It is superabundant in the Bay of Islands, and is used by the natives for bedding. Elasticity is one of its chief properties. The name given to this species of the *fuci* family by the New Zealanders is *mumuk*.

A LETTER FROM LISBON states that the sale of Crown diamonds, recently authorized by the Portuguese Cortes, has taken place at the Bank of Portugal. The principal purchaser was M. Bernard, of the Imperial diamond-cutters' establishment in France, to whom four of the principal lots of rough diamonds were knocked down for a sum of 1,800,000. The total proceeds of the day's sale were 1,800,000. These precious stones came from the mines of Minas Geraes, in Brazil. They were brought to Portugal, as has been stated, by King John VI. in 1821. The value of the diamonds which the Crown still has to sell is estimated at about thirty-five millions of francs. It is said that one rough stone among them will, when cut, surpass in size the finest at present known.

A BIOGRAPHY OF CROCKETT, the famous lion tamer, has just appeared. In it he tells the reader how he conquered his largest lion. One day, when travelling, the caravan containing the animals was upset, when, part of the harness of one of the horses being at a tempting distance from the lion's mouth, he seized it, perhaps thinking it something more palatable and less tough. Crockett, however, who had no desire to be left without harness for his horses, in inflicting chastisement on the lion, broke two of his teeth, and from that moment, he states, the lion was subdued. Some one then inquired whether, if the teeth were replaced, would the animal's ferocity return? As a dentist was not likely to turn up willing to undertake such a job, it does not matter to reply.

FALL OF HAY.—On Monday afternoon, about two o'clock, four of the members of St. Mary's Bowling-green, Dumfries, were amusing themselves at their favourite pastime, when they were astonished at observing some hay-straws falling as if from the clouds. Turning their eyes skyward, they saw several loose

tufts of hay floating at a great height—much higher than St. Mary's spire—in the air. They were all moving along in one direction—from S.S.W. to N.E.—and appeared to be carried along by a pretty strong current of wind. During the time the gentlemen were looking, the hay seemed to get out of the stream that was carrying it along, and fell to the ground, portions falling in the nursery-grounds near St. Mary's Church, and about half a handful on the bowling-green. It appears to be common meadow-hay, and was quite dry and withered up, precluding the idea that it could have been carried to the altitude at which it was first observed by a waterspout. The day was clear and still, with masses of clouds floating lazily overhead. This phenomenon, we think, can only be accounted for by supposing that a whirlwind passing over some meadow had lifted the hay-coils.—*Dumfries Standard.*

CHIDE NOT.

All! chide me not, if yet once more
I seek that love long sought in vain;
Nor blame me if, while I adore,
My vows are answered with disdain.

Yet let me still my cares retain,
Still droop, with folded arms, still sigh;
Nor mock me that I still remain
The willing captive of her eye.

And tortured thus, thus doomed to mourn,
I still must feel this cherished grief,
And could my peace once more return,
My heart would scorn the poor relief.

Then chide me not, if yet once more
I seek that love long sought in vain;
Nor blame me if, while I adore,
My vows are answered with disdain.

G. F. D.

SELF-MADE;

or,

OUT OF THE DEPTHS.

By Mrs. E. D. E. N. SOUTHWORTH,
Author of "The Hidden Hand," "The Lost Heiress," &c., &c.

CHAPTER XXXIX

ISHMAEL IN TANGLEWOOD.

Into a forest far, they thence him led
Where stood the mansion in a pleasant glade,
With great hills round about environed
And mighty woods which did the valley shade,
And like a stately theatre it made,
Spreading itself into a spacious plain,
And in the midst a little river played
Amongst the puny stones which seemed to plain
With gentle murmur that his course they did restrain.

The next morning Ishmael Worth went down to the shore to look out for the "Canvas Back." There was no certainty about the passing of these little sailing packets; a dead calm or a head wind might delay them for days and even weeks; but on this occasion there was no disappointment, and no delay, the wind had been fair, and the little schooner was seen flying before it up the river. Ishmael seated himself upon the shore and drew a book from his pocket to study while he waited for the arrival of the schooner. In less than an hour she dropped anchor opposite the landing, and sent off a large boat laden with boxes, and rowed by four stout seamen.

Three or four times the boat went back and forth between the schooner and the shore, each time bringing a heavy load. By the time the first load was brought and deposited upon the beach, Reuben Gray arrived at the spot with his team. The sailors received a small gratuity from Gray and returned to the schooner, which immediately raised anchor and continued her way up the river.

Ishmael, Reuben and Sam loaded the wagon with the boxes and set out for Tanglewood. Sam driving the team, Ishmael and Reuben walking beside it.

Through all the fertile and highly-cultivated fields that lay along the banks of the river they went, until they reached the borders of the forest, where Reuben's cottage stood. They did not pause here, but passed it and entered the forest. What a forest it was! They had scarcely entered it, when they became so buried in shade that they might have imagined themselves thousand miles deep in some primeval wilderness, where never the foot of man had trod. The road along which they went was grass-grown. The trees, which grew to an enormous size and gigantic height, interwove their branches thickly overhead. Sometimes these branches intermingled so low that they grazed the top of the wagon as it passed, while men and horses had to bow their heads.

"Why isn't this road cleared, Uncle Reuben?" inquired Ishmael.

"Because it is as much as a man's place is worth to touch a tree in this forest, Ishmael," replied Reuben.

"But why is that? The near branches of these

trees need lopping away from the roadside; we can scarcely get along."

"I know it, Ishmael; but the judge won't have a tree in Tanglewood so much as touched; it is his croquet."

Thicker and thicker grew the trees as they penetrated deeper into the forest; more obstructed and difficult became the road. Suddenly, without an instant's warning, they came upon the house, a huge, square building of grey stone, so overgrown with moss, ivy, and creeping vines that scarcely a glimpse of the wall could be seen. Its colours, therefore, blended so well with the forest trees, that one could scarcely suspect the existence of a building there.

"Here we are," said Reuben, while Sam dismounted and began to take off the boxes.

The front door opened, and a fat woman, apparently startled by the arrival of the waggon, made her appearance, asking:

"More books! what does master want with more books, when he is never here to read them he has got?" exclaimed the fat woman, raising her hands in dismay.

"That is none of our business, Katie! What we are to do is to obey orders; so, if you please, let us have the keys," replied Gray.

The woman disappeared within the house and remained absent for a few minutes, during which the men lifted the boxes from the waggon.

By the time they had set down the last one Katie reappeared with her heavy bunch of keys and beckoned them to follow her.

Ishmael obeyed, by shouldering a small box and entering the house, while Reuben Gray and Sam took up a heavy one between them and came after.

It was a noble old hall, with its walls hung with family pictures and rusty arms and trophies of the chase; with doors opening on each side into spacious apartments; and with a broad staircase ascending from the centre.

The fat old housekeeper, waddling along before the men, led them to the back of the hall, and opened a door on the right, admitting them into the library of Tanglewood.

Here the men set down the boxes. And when they had brought them all in, and Sam, under the direction of Gray, had forced off all the tops, laying the contents bare to view, the latter said:

"Now then, Ishmael, we will leave you to go to work and unpack; but don't you get so interested in the work as to disremember dinner-time at one o'clock precisely; and be sure you are punctual; because we've got veal and spunridge."

"Thank you, Uncle Reuben, I will not keep you waiting," replied the youth.

Gray and his assistant departed, and Ishmael was left alone with the wealth of books around him.

CHAPTER XL

THE LIBRARY.

Round the room are shelves of dainty lare,
And rich old pictures hang upon the walls,
Where the slant light falls on them; and wrought gems,
Medallions, rare mosaics and antiquies
From Herculaneum, the niches fill,
And on a table of enamel wrought
With a lost art in Italy, do lie
Prints of old women and engravings rare.

It was a noble room; four lofty windows—two on each side—admitted abundance of light and air; at one end was a marble chimney-piece, over which hung a fine picture of Christ disputing with the doctors in the temple; on each side of this chimney-piece were glass cases filled with rare shells, minerals, and other curiosities; all the remaining space along the walls and between the windows were filled up with book-cases; various writing-tables, reading-stands, and easy-chairs occupied the centre of the floor.

After a curious glance at this scene, Ishmael went to work at unpacking the boxes. He found his task much easier than he had expected to find it. Each box contained one particular set of books. On the top of one of the boxes he found a large, strong, blank folio, entitled—*"Library Catalogue."*

Ishmael took this book and sat down at one of the tables and divided it into twelve portions, writing over each portion the name of the subject to which he proposed to devote it, as "Theology," "Physics," "Jurisprudence," etc. The last portion he headed "Miscellaneous." Next he divided the empty shelves into similar compartments, and headed each with the corresponding names. Then he began to make a list of the books, taking one set at a time, writing their names in their proper portion of the catalogue and then arranging them in their proper compartment of the library.

Ishmael had just got through with "Theology," and was about to begin to arrange the next set of books in rotation, when he bethought himself to look at the timepiece, and seeing that it was after twelve, he hurried back to Woodsidge to keep his appointment with Reuben.

But he returned in the afternoon and recommended

work; and not only on this day, but for several succeeding days, Ishmael toiled cheerfully at this task. To arrange these books in perfect order and neatness was to Ishmael a labour of real love; and so when he had at last quite completed his task, it was with a feeling of regret at leaving the scene of it, that he locked up the library, returned the key to Katie, and took leave of Tanglewood.

Walking home through the forest that evening, Ishmael thought well over his future prospects. He had read and mastered all those text-books of law that he had found in the old escritoire of his bed-room; and now he wanted more advanced books on the same subject. Such books he had seen in the library at Tanglewood; and he had been sorely tempted to linger as long as possible there for the sake of reading them; but honest and true in thought and act, he resisted the temptation to appropriate the use of the books, or the time that he felt was not his own.

On this evening, therefore, he meditated upon the means of obtaining the books that he wanted. He was now about eighteen years of age, highly gifted in physical beauty and in moral and intellectual excellence; but he was still as poor as poverty could make him. He worked hard, much harder than many who earned liberal salaries; but he earned nothing, absolutely nothing, beyond his board and clothing.

This state of things he felt must not continue longer. It was now nearly nine months since he had left Mr. Middleton's school, and there was no chance of his ever entering another; so now he felt he must turn the education he had received to some better account than merely keeping Reuben Gray's farm-books; that he must earn something to support himself, and he must earn this "something" in the neighbourhood, too; for the idea of leaving poor Reuben with no one to keep his accounts never entered the unselfish mind of Ishmael.

Various plans of action as to how he should contrive to support himself and pursue his studies without leaving the neighbourhood suggested themselves to Ishmael. Among the rest, he thought of opening a country school. True, he was very young, too young for so responsible a post; but in every other respect, except that of age, he was admirably well qualified for the duty. While he was still meditating upon this subject, he unexpectedly reached the end of his walk and the gate of the cottage.

Reuben and Hannah were standing at the gate. Reuben's left arm was around Hannah, and his right hand held an open letter, over which both their heads were bent. Hannah was helping poor Reuben to spell out its contents.

Ishmael smiled as he greeted them, smiled with his eyes only, as if his bright spirit had looked out in love upon them; and thus it was that Ishmael always met his friends.

"Glad you've come home so soon, Ishmael—glad as ever I can be! Here's another rum go, as ever was!" said Gray, looking up from his letter.

"What is it, Uncle Reuben?"

"Why, it's a sort of notice from the judge. It seems he's given up his voyage to forrin parts; and instead of going out yonder for two or three years, he and Miss Merlin are coming down here to spend the summer—leastways, what's left of it," said Gray.

Ishmael's face flushed crimson, and then went deadly white, as he reeled and leant against the fence for support. Much as he had struggled to conquer his wild passion for the beautiful and high-born heiress, often as he had characterized it as mere boyish folly, or moonstruck madness—closely as he had applied himself to study in the hope of curing his mania—he was overwhelmed by the sudden announcement of her expected return—overwhelmed by a shock of equally blended joy and pain—joy at the prospect of soon meeting her, pain at the thought of the impassable gulf that yawned between them—"so near and yet so far!"

His extreme agitation was not observed by either Reuben or Hannah, whose heads were again bent over the puzzling letter. While he was still in that half-stunned, half-excited, and wholly confused state of feeling, Reuben went slowly on with his explanations:

"It appears the judge has got another government 'pointment, or some such thing, as will keep him here in his native land; so he and Miss Claudia, they be a coming down here to stop. So he orders me to tell Katie to get the house ready to receive them, by the first of next week; and law! this is Saturday! Leastways, that is all me and Hannah can make out of this here letter, Ishmael; you can take it and read it yourself," said Gray, putting the missive into Ishmael's hands.

With a great effort to recover his self-possession, Ishmael took the letter and read it aloud.

It proved to be just what Reuben and Hannah had made of it, but Ishmael's clear reading rendered the orders much plainer.

"Now, if old Katie won't have to turn her fat body round a little faster than she often does, I don't know nothing!" exclaimed Gray, when Ishmael had finished the reading.

Ishmael went up to his room, lighted his candle, and sat down to try to compose his agitated heart and apply his mind to study. But in vain; his eyes wandered over the pages of his book; his mind could not take in the meaning. The thought of Claudia filled his whole soul, absorbed his every faculty to the exclusion of every other idea.

"Oh, this will never, never do! It is weakness, folly, madness! What have I to do with Miss Merlin that she takes possession of my whole being in this manner? I must, I will conquer this passion!" he exclaimed, at last, starting up, throwing aside his book, and pacing the floor.

"Yes, I will overcome this infatuation!" he repeated, as he paused in his hasty walk, bowed his head, and folded his hands in prayer for deliverance from the power of inordinate and vain affections.

This done, he returned to his studies with more success. And long after he heard Hannah and Reuben re-enter the cottage and retire to their room, he continued to sit up and read. He read on perseveringly, until he had wearied himself out enough to be able to sleep. And his last resolution on seeking his bed was:

"I will conquer this passion! I will combat it with prayer, and study, and work!"

CHAPTER XLII.

CLAUDIA.

But she in those fond feelings had no share;
Her sighs were not for him; to her he was
Even as a brother; but no more; 'twas much
For brotherless she was save in the name
Her girlish friendship had bestowed on him;
Herself the solitary scion left
Of a time-honoured race. *Byron's Dream.*

ISHMAEL applied himself diligently to active outdoor work during the morning and to study during the evening hours.

At dinner-time Gray returned, and could talk of nothing but the improvement, beauty, and the grace of Miss Merlin.

"She is just too beautiful for this world, Hannah," he concluded, after having exhausted all his powers of description upon his subject.

After dinner Ishmael went up-stairs to his books, and Hannah took advantage of his absence to say to Gray:

"Reuben, I wish you would never mention Miss Claudia Merlin's name before Ishmael."

"Law! why?" inquired Gray.

"Because I want him to forget her."

"But why so?"

"Oh, Reuben, how dull you are! Well, if I must tell you, he likes her."

"Well, so do I! and so do every one!" said honest Reuben.

"But he likes her too well! he loves her, Reuben!"

"What! Ishmael love Judge Merlin's daughter—L-a-w! Why I should as soon think of falling in love with a royal princess!" exclaimed the honest man, in extreme astonishment.

"Reuben, hush! I hate to speak of it; but it is true. Pray, never let him know that we even suspect this truth; and be careful not to mention her name in his presence. I can see that he is struggling to conquer his feelings; but he can never do it while you continue to ding her name into his ears for everlasting."

"I'll be mum! Ishmael in love with Miss Merlin! Good gracious! how angry she'd be if she knew it."

After this conversation Reuben Gray was very careful to avoid all mention of Claudia Merlin in the hearing of Ishmael.

The month of August was drawing to a close. Ishmael had not once set eyes on Claudia, though he had chanced to see the judge on horseback at a distance several times. Ishmael busied himself in seeking out a room in the neighbourhood, in which to open a school on the 1st of September. He had not as yet succeeded in his object, when one day an incident occurred that, as he used it, had a signal effect on his future life.

It was a rather cool morning, in the latter part of August, when the youth, after spending an hour or two at work in the garden, dressed himself in his best clothes, and set off to walk to Rushy Shore farm where he heard there was a small school-house ready furnished with rough benches and desks, to be had at a low rent. His road lay along the high banks of the river, above the sands. He had gone about a mile on his way, when he heard the sound of carriage-wheels behind him, and in a few minutes caught a glimpse of an open barouche, drawn by a pair of fine, spirited grey horses, as it flashed by him. Quickly as the carriage passed, he recognized in the distinguished-looking young lady seated within it—Claudia!—recognized her with an electric shock that thrilled his whole being, paralyzed him where he stood and bound him to the spot! He gazed after the flying vehicle until it vanished from his sight. Then he sank down where he stood

and covered his face with his hands, and strove to calm the rising emotion that swelled his bosom. It was minutes before he recovered self-possession enough to rise and go on his way.

In due time he reached the farm—Rushy Shore—where the school-house was to let. It was a plain little house close to the river side and shaded by trees. It had been built for the use of a poor country master who had worn out his life in teaching for small pay the humbler class of country children. He rested from his earthly labours, and the school was without a teacher. Ishmael saw only the agent of the farm, who informed him that he had authority to let the schoolroom only until Christmas, as the whole estate had just been sold, and the new owner was to take possession at the beginning of the new year.

"Who is the new owner?" inquired Ishmael.

"Well, sir, his name is Middleton—Mr. James Middleton."

"Mr. Middleton! Mr. James Middleton!" exclaimed Ishmael, catching his breath for joy.

"Yes, sir; that is the gentleman; did you happen to know him?"

"Yes; intimately; he is one of the best and most honoured friends I have in the world!" said Ishmael, warmly.

"Then, sir, maybe he wouldn't be for turning you out of the school-house even when the time we can let it is up."

"No, I don't think he would," said Ishmael, smiling, as he took his leave and started on his return. He walked rapidly on his way homeward, thinking of the strange destiny that threw him again among the friends of his childhood, when he was startled by a sound as of the sudden rush of wheels. He raised his head and beheld a fearful sight! Plunging madly towards the very brink of the high bank rushed the horses of Claudia's returning carriage. The coachman had dropped the reins, which were trailing on the ground, sprung from his seat and was left some distance behind.

Ishmael saw and hurled himself furiously forward, seized the reins as the horses dashed up to him, and threw all his strength into the effort to turn them aside from their fate.

He did turn them from the brink of destruction, but alas! as they were suddenly and violently whirled round, they threw him down and passed, dragging the carriage with them, over his prostrate body!

At the same moment some fishermen on the sands below, who had seen the impending catastrophe, rushed up the bank, headed the maddened horses and succeeded in stopping them.

Messengers were immediately dispatched to Reuben Gray's cottage. But before they got in sight of the house, they came full upon Reuben, who was mounted on his white cob, and riding as if for a wager.

"Hey! halloa! stop!" cried the foreman man, throwing up his arms before the horse, which immediately stopped and shied.

"Hush, can't ye? Don't stop me now! I'm in a desperate hurry! I'm off for the doctor! My wife's taken bad, and may die before I get back!" exclaimed Reuben, with a scared visage, and he tried to pass the messengers.

"Going for the doctor! That's just where we were going to send you! Go as fast as you can, and if your wife isn't very bad indeed, send him first of all to Tanglewood, where he is wanted immediately."

"Who is ill there?" inquired Reuben, anxiously.

"Nobody! but your nephew has been knocked down and trampled nearly to death while stopping Miss Merlin's horses that were running away with her."

"Ishmael hurt! Good gracious! there's nothing but trouble in this world! Where is the poor lad?"

"Taken to Tanglewood. The doctor is wanted there."

"I'll send him as soon as ever I can; but I must get him to Hannah first! I must indeed! And with that Reuben put whip to his horse and rode away; but in a moment he wheeled again and rode back to the fisherman, saying:

"Haloo! are you going past our place?"

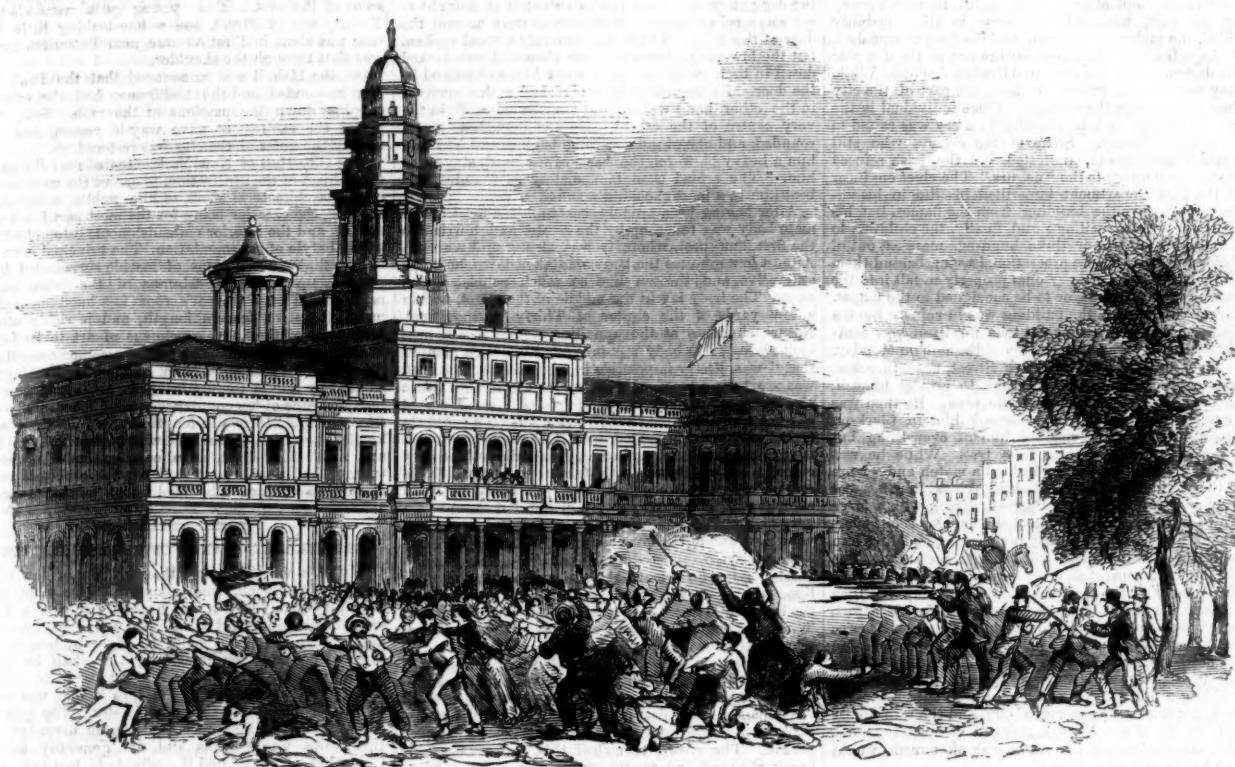
"Yes," replied the man.

"Well, then, mind and don't breathe a word about Ishmael's accident to Hannah, or to anybody about the place as might tell her; because she's very ill, and the shock might be her death, you know," said Reuben, anxiously.

"All right! we'll be careful," replied the man. And Reuben rode off.

He was so fortunate as to find Doctor Jarvis at his office and get him to come immediately to Woodsidge. But not until the doctor had seen Hannah and had given her a little alleviative medicine, and declared that his farther services would not be required by her for several hours yet, did Reuben mention to him the other case that awaited his attention at Tanglewood. And Doctor Jarvis, with a movement of impatience at the unnecessary delay, hurried thither.

(To be continued)



[THE CITY HALL, NEW YORK.]

THE RIOTS IN NEW YORK.

THE following details of this extraordinary outbreak of popular fury and unprovoked bloodshed are from the pen of an eye-witness of the scenes described:

In obedience to the order of President Lincoln to the Board of Enrolment at New York, the ceremony of drawing the names of persons liable to conscription for the United States army, was commenced in the eight districts of the city on Saturday, the 11th of July, and as that neighbourhood was mainly populated by Irish residents, who had loudly declared their hatred to the measure, some suspicion existed that the operation would not be carried out without interruption by the dissentient parties, but the most imaginative of the citizens of New York had not conceived the extreme length to which such interference would be carried by an infuriated mob of aliens.

The proceedings on Saturday passed over with no other indications of popular displeasure than the sullen murmuring which met the ear at every corner, and a grand banquet was given the same evening by the Provost Marshal of the city, "to celebrate the peaceful, harmonious, and patriotic proceedings," which had inaugurated the initiatory step of Federal domination over the people. So Saturday passed away. Sunday came, and with it the newspapers, which contented themselves with a recapitulation of the names of the unfortunate who had been whirled from the conscription-wheel as so much more prey for the destroying angel. This enumeration only imparted vigour to the kindling flames of popular resentment.

The leisure of Sunday afforded opportunity to the labourers and mechanics to meet, discuss, and decide upon the course they would adopt, and they were not long in coming to the conclusion that it was preferable to fight in New York, and take the chance of death at home, rather than seek it in the battle-field at a distance. This resolved led to prompt action.

Monday came—the weekly holiday of the mechanics and labourers in New York. Soon after dawn some two or three thousand people met in the Twenty-second Ward to die or die in arresting the draft. They commenced their march through the city, every minute serving to swell their numbers and to convince them that the authorities neither had made preparation nor were possessed of an adequate force to thwart their designs. Feeling satisfied upon this point, the people rushed on in the direction of the Ninth District, No. 677, Third Avenue, where the Provost-Marshal's headquarters were. They reached the building between ten and eleven o'clock and lost no time in commencing

the attack. They rushed into the room, seized the wheel and papers, dashing and tearing them to pieces, and after all the furniture was smashed and thrown into the street the building was set fire to, and, although fire-engines had speedily arrived on the spot, the firemen were prevented using any exertions to stem the conflagration, which soon spread to the adjacent buildings, Nos. 675 and 679, which were also devoured by the flames.

The telegraph wires next attracted the attention of the mob. Axes and other tools were dexterously handled in demolishing the posts and cutting the wires. The object of this step was obvious. The news, however, had already spread, and a detachment of the Provost Guard from the Park Barracks had not only been ordered to the scene of confusion and strife, but was at twelve o'clock, espied by the mob, who, with shouts of defiance, rent the air. The number of the guard did not exceed 50 men. It, therefore, amounted to nothing short of murder on the part of the authorities to send such a mere handful among a mob of desperate men who numbered as many thousands, and who would not shrink from unmercifully assailing all those who might be sent to interfere with the objects they had in view. The consequence was, that not one of the 50 men is supposed to have escaped. After firing upon the mob, to which course they were sorely urged by very rough usage from both men and women, the guard was speedily overcome; their muskets were immediately seized and fatally applied against themselves, some fiendish women having been seen to bayonet the soldiers, and afterwards use the butt-end, in dashing out their brains.

After disposing of the Provost Guard, the Bull's Head Hotel, in Fifty-third Street was the next object of attack by the rioters, who by this time had been largely increased in numbers as well as emboldened by success. In a few moments the mob rushed in and sacked it, and in less than twenty minutes it was a mass of flames. The rioters then gathered in the Fifth avenue, bearing a piece of board as a standard, with the motto, "No Draft" roughly painted on it. As they came down the Fifth avenue they broke down the telegraph poles, tore off the wires, and twisted them up into switches with which many of them armed themselves. During all this time there was not a policeman in sight. They had been driven away, for whenever one showed himself it was the signal for an attack with clubs and stones, so furious, that his life was not worth a five minutes' purchase. At the corner of Forty-second street a policeman fired a shot which killed a woman, and he was immediately set upon and so beaten, that it was not thought he could survive. The rumour that a soldier or policeman was concealed in a house at the

corner of Lexington Square, was sufficient to cause the building to be completely gutted, and then set on fire and destroyed.

As the mobs proceeded down Fifth Avenue, some carried rough clubs, some gas-pipes, some pieces of telegraph wire, some legs of pianos, tables, or chairs, and some were apparently armed. The next stop was between Twenty-eighth and Twenty-ninth Streets, at the Enrolling Office. The flag in front of the building was torn from its place, and thereafter used as the rallying banner of the crowd. The windows of the building were then broken in; the crowd entered, tearing and breaking everything inside, and throwing furniture into the street. The Enrolment building being completely gutted, a fire was kindled, and in a short time had extended so as to be beyond the efforts of the firemen.

The most singular exhibition of all was the feeling displayed against negroes wherever they appeared. However great the pains these inoffensive individuals took to keep out of sight and to avoid observation, the boys in the mob would detect them and start the crowd in pursuit. Before they could reach places of safety, the unfortunate negroes were in several instances most roughly and barbarously handled, and some of them barely escaped with their lives. In three instances at least, to the eternal shame and disgrace of the city be it recorded, three of these unfortunates lost their lives. One who was quietly going to his home in the upper part of the city, after having been out to purchase his evening meal, was attacked by a number of the rioters, and, after his brains had been beaten out upon the pavement, was suspended to a tree in the vicinity. Nor was it until late in the evening that the police mustered strength and courage sufficient to cut down the body. It would be utterly impossible to find in the history of the country a parallel to this act of lawless and fiendish brutality, and it will ever rest as a foul blot upon the annals of the city. Arrived at Mayor Oddyke's house, the infuriated rabble loudly expressed their intention of destroying it. Fortunately, Judge Barnard interfered, and, after a conciliatory speech to the mob, in which he said he would issue a writ of *habeas corpus* for any drafted man for whom application was made, he induced them to go away—materially assisted, however, by a large force of police, who put in an appearance at the time, and freely used their clubs on the more reluctant of the crowd. The military and police now began acting in concert and on an apparently organized plan.

At about eight o'clock in the evening the *Tribune* office was furiously assaulted, the counting-house and the various floors gutted, and a large quantity of paper set on fire, with a view of destroying the building. A

large body of police, however, arrived to prevent this catastrophe, and after a sharp fight, in which many persons were wounded, and some in all probability killed, the mob was dispersed, and the fire extinguished. Perhaps the worst and most savage act of the day was the destruction of the Coloured Orphan Asylum. While they were roving around in the upper part of the city they came across the asylum. Some individual in the mob stated the fact, and forthwith a cry was raised to burn the building. Some of the rioters, who still retained their reason, protested, but the Irish refused to show any mercy to the "niggers." The chief engineer of the Fire Department imperilled his life in his endeavour to save the building from the flames, but his efforts proved unavailing; and, finally, the children, to the number of two or three hundred, marched out of their asylum in solemn procession, leaving behind them all their furniture and personal property to fall into the hands of the pillagers, or to be consigned to the flames, and in a few hours the building was in ruins. Such a disgraceful and barbarous act tells for itself how completely the city was at the mercy of the mob on Monday.

A negro living in Cornelius Street, near Bleeker, was set upon by the crowd, and, to protect himself, drew a revolver and shot a white man. He then was pursued by the mob, who overtook him in Clarkson Street, near Hudson, stripped him of everything but his shirt, and hung him to a tree. While he was hanging, one of the rioters lighted a match and set fire to the victim's shirt. About eight o'clock, four negroes were seen running down Carmine Street, with a large crowd in close pursuit. One of the negroes was overtaken, turned and fired upon his pursuer, shooting him with three bullets, and killing him instantly. The negroes then separated, each taking a different route. The pursuit of the three others was given up, but they pursued the first to near the corner of Varick Street, where he was secured and horribly beaten. His cries for mercy were perfectly horrifying. He was beaten till dead, and then hung to a tree. The field was then left to a party of boys, who amused themselves by building a fire around and under him, but he was too high for the flames to reach him, and the rain finally put out the fire. He was stripped completely naked. It is said that one of the others was afterwards caught and killed in Spring Street.

But it would be impossible to give even a brief notice of all the acts of atrocity—murders, outrages, and wilful destruction of property—committed by the mob on this first day of the riots. A simple enumeration of some of the buildings destroyed by fire is in itself sufficiently appalling. These are:—the Provost Marshal's office, Forty-sixth Street and Third Avenue, with the two adjoining buildings; two houses between Forty-third and Forty-fourth Streets; the large frame hotel in Forty-fourth Street; the armory; the Provost-Marshal's office, Broadway; 62, 74, and 76, Roosevelt Street, occupied by coloured people; the residence of Colonel Robert Nugent; the Coloured Orphan Asylum, &c. At ten o'clock on Monday night about fifteen fires were blazing away in various stages of intensity; and after that hour a number of other fires, more or less extensive, had burst out. At eleven o'clock at night the military command of the city was consigned to Major-General Sandford.

The violence and disorder on Tuesday (the 14th) exceed those of Monday. Several fatal encounters took place between the populace and the police and military. At two o'clock in the afternoon a company of eighty-eight men and four 32-pound howitzers, under command of Major Fearing, went to the corner of Eleventh Avenue and Forty-second Street, to disperse a crowd there sacking a jewellery store and firing buildings in the vicinity. There were about 1,000 men in the mob, who were armed with pistols, clubs, knives, swords, &c. At the appearance of the soldiers the mob fired on them, and a battle ensued which lasted over a quarter of an hour, and in which Major Fearing was severely wounded on the left temple. The soldiers were finally driven to the arsenal by the desperadoes who attempted an attack upon the building. In Thirty-fourth Street, there was also some desperate fighting from an early hour. Colonel O'Brien, of the 11th Regiment, commanded the military and police forces in this quarter, and had under his control a couple of field-pieces. In the course of the fighting several were killed and wounded on both sides.

Colonel O'Brien was on horseback, and had the entire command of the military. It was by his orders that they fired, and also by his instrumentality, whether he be right or wrong in the matter, that the heart's blood of many an able youth was stopped in its flowings. Probably the most heartrending occurrence which one could imagine took place during this fight. Colonel O'Brien held a revolver in his hand, and was riding up and down between either line of the crowd. He, as it is stated, fired his revolver into their midst, the ball killing a woman and child, which she held in her arms. After several rounds had been fired the people began to disperse, and the police proceeded to another part of the city. Colonel O'Brien and his command, however, remained. The colonel dismounted from his horse and

walked into a drug store. Colonel O'Brien stayed in the drug store for some few minutes; it is thought to get some refreshments. The crowd were around the door at this time. There was scarcely a word spoken, but the lowering glances of one thousand men looked down in their vengeful spirit upon him as he stood in the door. He then drew his sword, and with a revolver in the other hand walked out on the sidewalk in the very centre of the crowd. He was immediately surrounded, and one of the men came behind, and, striking him a heavy blow on the back of the head, staggered him. The crowd then immediately surrounded and beat him in a most shocking manner.

After having been terribly beaten his almost inanimate body was taken up by the crowd and hurried to the first lamp-post, where it was strung up by a rope. After a few minutes the body was taken down, he being still alive, and thrown like so much rubbish in the street. The body lay in the middle of the street, within a few yards of the corner of Thirty-fourth Street. Nature shuddered at the appalling scenes which here took place. The body was mutilated in such a manner that it was utterly impossible to recognise it. The head was nearly one mass of gore, while the clothes were also saturated with the crimson fluid of life. A crowd of some three hundred persons surrounded the prostrate figure. These men looked upon the terrible sight with the greatest coolness, and some even smiled at the gory object. Notwithstanding the fearful process which the soldier had gone through, he was yet breathing with evident strength, the eyes were closed, but there was a very apparent twitching of the eyelids, while the lips were now and again convulsed, as if in the most intense agony.

After lying for somewhat about an hour in this position, several of the crowd took hold of the body by the legs and dragged it from side to side of the street. This operation was gone through with several times, when the crowd again left the body lying in its original position. Had Colonel O'Brien been a man of weak constitution, he would certainly have ceased to exist long before this time. He was, however, through life a man of great natural strength, and this fact probably kept him breathing longer than would another person. The crowd remarked this, and watched his every slightest movement with the most intense anxiety. Now and then the head would be raised from the ground, while an application of a foot from one of the crowd would dash the already mangled mass again to the earth. This conduct was carried on for some time, and when the reporter left the body was still lying in the street, the last spark of existence having taken flight.

Another of the fearful conflicts of the day was in Second-avenue. It was known to the mob that some hundreds of carbines were hidden away by the authorities in the Union Steam Works building, and the place was accordingly forced and plundered by the rioters. While thus engaged a force of 300 police arrived on the ground, and quickly assembled around the entrance to the building. The rioters inside were notified by their confederates in the street, but the alarm came too late, and as the mob attempted to escape, throwing away their guns, they had to run the gauntlet of a file of police, and but few escaped a terrible application of the clubs. Some limped away badly hurt, while half a dozen in a moment lay prostrate and insensible. Several hundreds of the rioters still remained in the building, which was a large one of brick, and many stories high, and seemingly were barricading themselves for protection against the police. The order was given for a portion of the force to enter the building, while the remainder guarded the places of exit. The policemen rushed upon the mob, and, after a few moments of desperate fighting, the crowd gave way, many of them leaping from the windows, and others rushing to the doors for escape. The police remained triumphant for the moment, but some time afterwards the mob re-assembled in still larger numbers, beat the police severely, and re-occupied the building.

At half past two o'clock a force of police and enrolled citizens, under Captain Helme, accompanied by a detachment of regulars, under Captain Franklin, arrived in the vicinity, and were ordered to take the factory by storm and disarm the mob at all hazards. The force was divided in squads, so as to come forward simultaneously from all directions toward the building. The mob there were busily preparing themselves for a desperate resistance, and the surrounding streets were filled with an excited crowd. The police and military came briskly forward, and were received in many places with a storm of stones, brick and shot. The regulars fired at the crowd in each instance where they did not immediately disperse, and volleys were discharged down First and Second Avenues, as well as along Twenty-second Street. The policemen also made liberal use of their revolvers. The streets were cleared in a few moments, and the building containing the arms was again taken possession of. A large number of the rioters were killed and wounded, and many citizens who had taken no part in the sets of violence, as well as a number of women and children, were shot in the streets.

Some of them were struck half a mile away from the scene of the riot. Four young girls were shot in Twenty-second Street, and a fine-looking little boy, who was alone in First Avenue, near Twentieth Street, was shot through the shoulder.

On the 15th, it was announced that the Draft had been suspended, and the intelligence had the effect of calming down the passions of the mob. From that period the excitement gave way to reason, and ultimately the quiet of the city was restored.

The City Hall of New York, situated near the parks, the subject of the illustration, is one of the most imposing, in architectural effect, of the public buildings of the city, the exterior being for the most part faced with marble, and the interior embellishments being of a truly palatial style of ornamentation. The principal entrance is by a flight of six steps of marble surrounded by a portico, upon sixteen columns of the same costly material. The Governor's room is a handsome apartment, fifty-two feet in length, and is richly stored with some of the finest specimens of art to be found in the United States. The hall of common council still contains the Presidential chair of George Washington, as used by him in the first congress assembled after the independence of his country was established. The edifice, which is 212 feet in length, by 105 in width, with an elevation of fifty-one feet, was commenced in 1803, and finished in 1812, at a cost, exclusive of furniture, of half a million of dollars; the architect being J. McCombe, jun., who died at an advanced age in 1853.

REMARKABLE CHANGE OF FORM IN METALS.

WHEN, a short time ago, the workmen at the Royal Arsenal, Woolwich, were about to shoe a wheel with a hoop-type, to which it was necessary to give a bevel of about three-eighths of an inch, one of the men suggested that the bevel could be given by heating the tyre red-hot and then immersing it one-half its depth in cold water. This was tried and found to answer perfectly; that portion of the tyre which was out of the water being reduced in diameter. The tyre was 3 in. wide, $\frac{1}{2}$ in. thick, and 4 ft. 2 in. in diameter. As this result was curious and not generally known, Colonel Clerk considered it desirable to institute some further experiments, in order to try how far, by successive heatings and coolings, this change of form could be augmented, and also whether the same effect could be produced on other metals than wrought iron.

The experiments were made on cylinders of wrought iron of different dimensions, both hollow and solid—immersed some to one-half of their depth, others to two-thirds; also on similar cylinders of cast-iron, steel, tin, zinc, and gun-metal. With wrought iron the heatings and castings could be repeated from fifteen to twenty times before the metal showed any signs of separation; but with cast-iron, after the fifth heating, the metal was cracked; and the hollow cylinder separated all round just below the water-line, after the second heating. Cast steel stood twenty heatings, but was very much cracked all over its surface. As respects the change of form of cast iron and steel, the result was similar to that in wrought iron, but not nearly so large in amount. The cast iron did not return to its original dimensions; but the smallest diameter was about one inch above the water-line. Tin showed no change of form, there being apparently no intermediate state between the melting point and absolute solidity. Brass, gun-metal, and zinc showed the effect slightly; but instead of a contraction just above the water-line, there was an expansion or bulging.

La France asserts that the difference upon the Polish question hitherto existing between Lord Palmerston and Earl Russell has terminated, and that both are now completely agreed to support energetically the common action of the Three Powers.

A PAINFUL ORDEAL.—The *Richmond Dispatch* of July 7th says:—"In the Libby Prison yesterday, by order of General Winder, the captains among the Yankee prisoners drew lots for two of their number to be shot, in retaliation for the shooting of Captain William F. Corbin and T. J. McGraw, by General Burnside, at Sandusky, Ohio, on the 13th May last. The prisoners were assembled in a room, at twelve o'clock, by Captain Turner, the commandant of the prison, and after being formed in a hollow square around a table, were informed of the order of General Winder. Slips of paper, each containing the name of one of the officers present, was carefully folded up and deposited on the table. Captain Turner then informed the men that they might select whom they pleased to draw the names, and the first two names drawn would indicate those to be shot. The lots were drawn by the Rev. Mr. Brown, amid a silence almost deathlike. The first ballot drawn contained the name of Captain Henry Washington Sawyer, of the 1st New Jersey Cavalry; the second that of Captain John Flynn, of the 51st Indiana Volunteers. The day of their execution has not yet been fixed."

THE DEVIL'S CHAMBER.

I WAS about to change my lodgings. For two years the same faded hangings, the same cracked chimney-piece, the same mended panes of blue-green glass, had met my eye, and I was tired of the monotony of the place. Besides, I was in love—very soberly and common-sensibly, too, for the lady was the daughter of a wealthy furrier, good-looking, accomplished, and with no fuss and nonsense about her. Some ladies fancy that men are willing and delighted slaves of their petty and senseless tyranny. Let them look to it, for after the marriage-knot is tied they will be revenged for all the humble-pie they have been forced to eat.

It was very long before I was suited, but at last I found a room very handsome, very reasonable, in a large, old-fashioned stone house in one of the best quarters of the city. I had looked at several in the same building, but the price did not suit me. At last the man whose business it was to show the premises said there was one apartment on the floor above, as good as any in the house, but much cheaper, on account of—her he mumbled something indistinctly, to which I was too tired to listen with much interest, leading the way up-stairs all the while, I following closely.

"A splendid room!" I ejaculated as I entered; "just the thing, and very neatly furnished, too."

Yes, the only apartment in the house, he said, that was left as it had been originally furnished. Even the portrait of the man in black, with piercing eye of the hue of night, and a rose in his button-hole, and the other of an ancient lady at his left, whose outlines had so faded into the misty background that nothing was to be seen but the patch of powder on her hair, and the brilliant eyes that quite startled one, there was such a look of unearthing about them, had never been removed from the walls. It was in the will of the old proprietor, he said, who was a queer sort of fellow, and therefore this particular room was seldom used.

It was of course haunted, then, I said, hoping that his answer might confirm my wish; for, all my life, not being in the slightest degree superstitious, I had longed to get possession of a reputedly haunted room.

Not that he knew of, he said, with a strange smile. There had never been ghostly sights or noises complained of by any of the lodgers.

I remarked that there was an appearance of uniformity about it which argued that it had not been occupied for a long time.

There was, he said, and in fact it had not been let for nearly two years. Some way, people didn't like so retired a room; perhaps its antiquity was objectionable—it would be to him; very few people liked ancient things. They preferred furniture fresh and new from the upholsterer's, something that had the glitter of the varnish upon it.

This to me constituted the whole charm of the place. That antique four-post bedstead—why, it would be Elysium to rest upon it. The table, round, dull and black, with its heavy, unshining claws for legs; the tall old clock, whose wheels gave a ghastly whirr, and then stopped when I moved the pendulum; the oval-backed chairs with their worn leather facings, even the threadbare Brussels carpet of the oddest and quaintest pattern, all pleased and interested me. Then there was a fireboard, and of course an open fireplace behind it. A good draught, too, the man said—never smoked, as I might know by the ceiling. I looked up; the whitewash might have been put on yesterday, it was so clear and bright. It would distress me for awhile, no doubt, to miss the familiar patch of broken plaster which was wont to be the first thing to salute my opening eyes, but I should soon get accustomed to it. I paid a month's rent in advance, and determined to send my trunk that very evening, and take up my quarters at once. Such a snug, comfortable, ancient room I had not seen for an age. I even caught myself wondering if it would not do, with a little extra furniture, for two. It would be pleasant to begin life so economically, and at the same time genteelly.

I turned to go down-stairs. When near the landing my foot caught, how, I know not; it seemed as if something invisible tripped me, and I fell to the bottom. "I hope you have not hurt yourself, sir," said the landlord, hurrying to my assistance; and I fancied I saw that same peculiar expression pass over his face that I had noticed once or twice before.

For a moment I feared a fracture was the consequence, for I could not stand without help, but after a little vigorous rubbing, I found myself better, and limped home to my old lodgings, where, by a liberal application of liniment, I restored my leg to its original suppleness, so that at least the limp was scarcely discernible.

That evening I called upon Adela. The darling girl met me, as usual, with smiles of welcome, congratulated me on having found a pleasant home, and introduced me to an old aunt who had travelled, she told me, nearly fifteen hundred miles to visit the home of her youth. She was a little, deformed creature, with the whitest hands and brightest eyes I ever saw. Age had

bent her nearly double, but had not taken from her more valuable attractions. She was as lively and chatty as a young girl of sixteen, adverting to the past so cheerily, that I thought there must have been much sunshine about it to make it so pleasant to the memory of age. And so there was—sunshine of the heart. Hers had been one of those joyous natures that find flowers everywhere; to whom a shining crystal is as beautiful as a diamond.

"You have no idea of the trouble Aunt Eunice has seen," whispered Adela to me, as we sat aside after some music. "In her youth she was quite celebrated as a beauty, and was the reigning belle for years before she was wooed and won, strangely enough, by a Mexican gentleman, who was immensely rich. She left home with the stranger, and travelled for five years, during which time she visited every remarkable place on the continent. Then she went back to Mexico, and lived there fifteen years, having in the meantime seven daughters and three sons. Her husband failed miserably, became a gambler and drunkard, and finally shot himself. Her struggles after that, in a strange country, with her little children to feed, clothe and educate, would in the recital bring tears to your eyes. She was married again, some four years after, to a general, a rich but brutal Mexican, who treated her children so savagely that he almost broke her heart. Attempting to escape from the monster, he fired a pistol at her. The shot took effect in her right lung, and for days she lay at the point of death. The populace was so incensed at this deed of atrocity that the general was obliged to leave his home, or most surely he would have been publicly chastised.

"On her recovery she left the country, and came to England, bringing several jewels of value, and some hundreds of pounds. For three or four years she lived comfortably, and became the head of a well-established school for young ladies, but after that period she found her husband again on her track. I forgot to say that by the general she had one son, a beautiful, delicate boy, now some eight years old. On the reappearance of the general, you may imagine her terror for the possession of her boy, for it was evidently the sole purpose of obtaining him that he had tracked her to England.

"He put up at an hotel, drove the most splendid equipage, with liveried servants behind, and often stopped before madam's house for the purpose of aggravating and terrifying her. The boy had to be kept like a little prisoner. Aunt Eunice would not trust him out of her sight for one minute; and the child, idolizing his mother, very willingly submitted to his captivity. In this state of terror, which left its indelible marks upon her face, she lived for one year. Once she came very near losing the boy. She had gone out, giving strict directions to the nurse, as usual. Some strange impulse, she says, led her to return before she anticipated. The boy was just being dressed, the nurse putting the finishing touches to his attire as she entered.

"What is the meaning of this?" she cried, sternly. "Surely madam was in the carriage, for I saw her myself," said the nurse, alarmed.

"I in the carriage?—what do you mean? I have been on foot."

"But, madam, it was you I saw in—"

"Yes, mamma, I too," cried the boy; "and I did so want to drive with you! It is so long since I have taken a drive."

"But what can you mean? There was a carriage at the door, but it drove off as I came."

"Then, madam," cried the nurse, in accents of horror, "it was he who contrived to get some one who dressed like you, and so I could have sworn, she did look like you, with her veil down. The Lord preserve us! what I might have done!"

"Hereafter," said Aunt Eunice, sternly, catching the frightened boy in her arms, "obey no messages, not even mine, unless you see me near to enforce them."

"Did he ever get the boy?"

"Never; he, too, was doomed to die a strange death. He was bitten, it was thought, by a spider. The wound was slight and scarcely claimed his attention, but began to swell in a short time, until the arm, from the finger to the shoulder, was like a mass of bruised flesh. For one week he remained in this state, refusing to have his arm amputated. Aunt Eunice heard that he was not expected to recover, and acting upon the principles that had governed her life, she went to see him, and staid by him, nursing him faithfully, till he died. You remember those buildings in — Street?"

"Certainly," for it was in one of them I had taken lodgings.

"Well, that was all, once, a large hotel. It is now divided into dwelling-places. In that he had taken a suite of rooms, sleeping in what Aunt Eunice calls the devil's chamber."

"The devil's chamber!" I ejaculated, in extreme surprise; "a strange name to give any decent room."

"What are you talking about?" exclaimed the old lady, wheeling her chair round and fixing her bright eyes upon us.

"About the devil's chamber," said Adela, demurely.

The old lady started a little, as she replied—

"There is in many a house a prophet's chamber, but I hope and trust there is but one like that of which you speak in the world. It used to be a good deal talked of, but people have dropped it now, I suppose. How many years have you been here, sir?" she asked.

I replied, "But two."

"Oh, then of course you've not heard anything about it," she said, "I'll go get my knitting, without which it would be impossible for me to tell a story, and then we'll see what we can make from the ashes of old times."

"Let me get it for you, aunt," said Adela, rising.

"You attend to your lover, child," said the old lady, bluntly; "I can help myself yet," and she left us, Adela crimson, and I looking rather sheepish.

"She was with him, you say, when he died?" I resumed, finding that something must be said.

"Yes, and the boy, too. He was very much touched, expressed great contrition, and after confession and absolution, made a new will, leaving all his property to her and the boy. She is very wealthy, I believe."

"She has not been here for several years, you say?"

"Some ten or twelve. She was forty when her husband died; she is now nearly sixty-five. All her daughters are well married, and so are her sons. She has been living with them, and they contend for the pleasure of her society. She is always as you see her now."

"And the young heir?"

"Oh, that is the saddest thing. Do not mention him to her, for even now she cannot bear to hear his name. He died at the age of twenty-one—a violent death, too. He was thrown from his horse while hunting, and instantly killed. It was the bitterest drop in her cup of sorrow; she nearly died, and I think it was that made her so suddenly grey and bent. Literally, she has never held her head up since."

By this time the active little woman had returned, and seated herself in the chair, her little white hands flying and dancing with the gleam of the needles and thread-like light of the soft wool spun so fine.

"I was going to tell you about the devil's chamber," she said, quite soberly, almost sadly. "I don't believe any one was ever in it, even for a few moments, but met with some misfortune, some accident or trouble, sometimes trivial, sometimes momentous. I learned all I know from a grandson of the proprietor of the house. It was built for an hotel by a Mr. Von Brust, the descendant of an illustrious German family, who had been obliged, owing to political troubles, some say also on account of a duel he had fought, to fly for his life. He brought a small capital and great activity to this country. He soon became very wealthy, through some fortunate speculations, and one of his schemes was the building of the large hotel, that was once the handsomest and best in the country. His wife having died, meantime, he married a very beautiful girl of only eighteen summers, I believe, he then being in his sixtieth year. She was very poor, and somewhat ignorant, but her uncommon beauty covered all defects. She became extremely popular, and admiration and flattery turned her giddy head. Her poor husband, as he ought to have foreseen, was neglected for younger and handsomer men, and balls, parties and the opera took up all her attention. The babe that came, a lovely boy, did not seem to engross her motherly attention with his innocence and beauty. She was lost to all home-endearments. This room, which went for years by the name of the devil's room, was the poor lady's bedchamber. They say the furniture has scarcely been moved for years."

I shuddered to myself as I thought of my morning's interview, and the precipitous haste with which I had sent my trunk away.

"There was some terrible work done in that room. I have never rightly understood what it was. Some say the lady's favourite was murdered in cold blood, some that she herself was strangled there, in his presence. Suffice it to say murder was committed, under circumstances more or less aggravated; and when the officers of justice came upon the scene, they were obliged to force open the door. You may imagine the horrors they saw. Von Brust had poisoned himself, after making his will. The delicate hangings of the bed and walls and toilette were torn down, and all was horror and desolation. That part of the house was shut up for a time, and the babe taken by some person to bring up. The boy inherited an immense fortune, together with the hotel. The room in which the deed was committed was never to be disturbed in the furnishing. Perhaps some silent, terrible curse was enwoven with all its belongings—who can tell? Some years after, the house was rejuvenated, and again became a popular place of resort for travellers. I have heard some weird stories connected with the room I am speaking of particularly, all of which may be true, and some of them frightful to a degree; but I happen also to know some facts which it may not be amiss to tell you. The first time I was ever in the house was on a painful occasion. That room was occupied by a friend dying with a dangerous wound. When I left it after the first visit, half-way

down the staircase, I tripped in the most unaccountable manner, and so sprained my ankle that I could not bear my weight on it for weeks. The second time I went there I was taken from my carriage in a chair, and carried over the stairs. On my return home I found my boy had wounded himself so severely with a knife that, but for the promptness of friends, and the assistance of a surgeon, he would have bled to death. The third time, to insure him against accident, I took my child with me, and on my return, found the interior of my room completely burnt out, and many of my most valuable dresses, together with my child's whole wardrobe, reduced to ashes. These things, occurring as they did at the particular times of my visits to the place of dread, set me to conjecturing whether there could be any connection between the accidents and the singular room, of whose history I had been told. My child had always been exposed to the same danger, and yet had avoided it till then; my servants, I knew, were extremely particular about the fire, and as far as I could ascertain, there was no fire kindled on that day. I resolved that I would go to that ill-fated room no more, and I did not.

"In the summer of 18— we had come on a visit, my youngest son and myself. We stopped at my brother's here—it was years ago, Ada, you were but a wee thing. The house was full of company, and among them she who would have been my daughter—the loveliest blossom these eyes ever beheld. But then she was his choice, and whatever he loved I loved with a passion almost as tender as his. What a delightful evening we had; I think I never was happier, or in better spirits, and Lucius, my noble, handsome boy—"

Tears filled her bright eyes—her little white fingers trembled.

"I did not think she would speak of him," whispered Ada.

"Yes, that was an evening to remember. Some of the guests came from a distance, and it happened somewhat singularly, that our three sisters, each without the knowledge of the other, met on that night, each one coming from a distant home. It seemed as if we never could part. The night wore on, and found us still merry, careless, joyful. Lucius came to me and whispered, as he always did, that he was going home with his darling, and I kissed her good night. I knew not why, but I yearned to follow them; I could not bear to have them out of my sight. I went as far as the door. I can see his bright face now as he turned round from the bottom of the steps, saying, playfully:

"Bye-bye, little mamma." I was very small, you see, and he always called me little mamma. "Maybe I shan't be back to-night, for they are crowded here. If not you'll know I'm safe. I'll find lodgings with some of my chums."

"How dare you go away, then," I cried, "without a good-night kiss?"

"Sure enough," he said, and sprang lightly up the steps, with a whispered word to his darling. Oh, well for my peace that he did, for it was the last kiss those blessed lips ever gave me! I doubt not he left their sweetness on the forehead of his promised bride. I can see her as she stood there smiling back at us both, her beautiful eyes suffused. Do you not think she loved him? She has never married from that day to this, and I bless her for the sake of my dead boy."

There was a long silence after that. We could almost hear the beating of our hearts.

"The next day," she resumed, in a lower voice, a throb of anguish underlying every fibre of tones usually sweet as music, "he sent me a note early in the morning:

"DEAR LITTLE MAMMA,—I am off to some hill or other, I forget now, with Harris. We are going to take horses, and have a glorious hunt. Shall see you at sundown; so, darling, good-bye till then.

"Von Brust Hotel."

"I never can tell the emotions that filled me, thrilled me, when I read the ending of that letter—Von Brust Hotel. My heart grew icy cold. Had he for one moment entered the precincts of that fated room? I knew they never gave it to travellers unless the house was full, but there was a fair in the neighbourhood, and it was more than likely all the places of public resort would be crowded for weeks. A terrible reaction came over me, my strength was gone—I was motionless with fear and horror.

"Twelve long hours to look forward to in this frightful suspense; how could I bear it? I put on my things and hurried over to Alice, his darling. She met me with such happy smiles. Never had she been so brilliantly gay as during the little time I spent with her. No shadow threw its dark length across the sunshine of her soul; she felt no aspen-like quiver of the nerves, no tremour of the heart-strings. Talking only of the brightness and beauty reflected from her own heart, it seemed to me, in my state of mind, that I could not bear it. I bade her good-day, and hurried away in the direction of the Von Brust House. Entering, I asked to see the book. I knew how particular my boy always was to register his name. Yes, there it was—Lucius

Alestre, room forty-nine. The fatal number—the devil's room. The hotel must have been full. What possessed the boy to go to his ruin? I crawled back home more dead than alive. It seemed as if evil spectres were beside and around me, impelling me to distracted thoughts that enter only the brain of madness. I felt their cold touch on my head, my arms. I heard their mocking laughter. I told you, such thoughts enter only the crazed brain. For the time, I believed I was nearly mad. I could eat no dinner, but pleaded indisposition. Could I but have known where Lucius had gone with his friend, it would have cooled the fever in my veins and my head to have driven there, perhaps to meet, warn and protect him. But alas! how powerless I was. Again I called upon Alice. She was pale and quiet. Her good spirits had fled. She wore a strangely introverted look.

"I scarcely know why it is," she said, "but since noon I have felt unhappy. What is it? The sun is just as bright, but somehow it doesn't look to me as if the sun was shining."

"I took her hands and gazed in her eyes, quite full of tears now.

"I understand you, darling," I said, "I have felt just so hapless and helpless since this morning."

"And do you imagine—do you think that harm has come to him?" she quivered, her lips and cheeks fading out.

"Darling, we can only wait and hope," I said to her, but I could not soothe her now. Her terror grew into something so real that she could neither conceal nor suppress it. Again and again she would say, "I am sure something has happened to Lucius—I am sure."

"It was well, for me, perhaps, that I had this distracted heart to look after, to assure, for it diverted my mind from the full horror of my own imaginings. The time went leadenly on. At every footstep I started, at every touch of the bell I flew to the door, and as for Alice's bloodless face, it was agony to see it. Well, I am prolonging my story, for the end is unwelcome. My poor, beautiful boy!"

A gasp and a sob ended the cry.

"Aunty, I wouldn't speak of it, dear," said Ada, tenderly.

"Yes, I will," she said, resolutely. "I will, for it is long past, and I shall meet him soon. That day, at noon, he was thrown from his horse. I did not know it till night, and then he was—"

She could not say dead.

"Yes, that room," she cried, "surely it had a fitting name—the devil's chamber—for all who entered there found blight and sorrow."

"Do you know of any other instances?" I asked, worked up to a pitch of uneasiness that was disagreeably acute, as my wounded limb gave token that I, too, had been a recipient of the satanic favour.

"Oh, many," she replied, "if the recital of them will not make you nervous."

I begged her to proceed. Inclined to sup on horrors, I could not lose the opportunity of so relishing a feast. And I saw, also, that she was an inveterate story-teller, and that it pleased her to dwell on the past, even to the unfolding of tragedies that stirred the deepest sympathies of her own and her hearers' hearts.

"Among the friends I knew some years ago, before Lucius had attained his majority, was a family by the name of Careno. The father was a major in the army, and the mother a member of one of the most aristocratic families. They had but one daughter, Ada Lucia, the sweetest blossom that ever gladdened a parent's eyes. Both father and mother idolized her. It was curious to see them watch her graceful motions. Whatever was transpiring around them, their eyes would unconsciously and fondly follow her.

"I think I never saw such ethereal beauty as hers, and every one observed the same thing. When she sat sometimes in deep thought, as she often did, her beautiful blue eyes full of a spiritual brilliancy, her lips curving into smiles of interior delight, I could have studied her for hours. The girl clung to her parents, and seemed to reject all offers and admiration, until there came one whose mind and person were fitting counterparts of hers. Leon Hamlin was an only son. He had no father, but his mother was very wealthy, and he inherited a fortune from his deceased parent. I never saw two more innocent creatures than they. The world had spoilt neither of them. Their happiness seemed almost too perfect for earth, and I doubt not that it was. Looking back, I can see why they were not allowed—but however I must not anticipate. At the time of their marriage I was absent, or disasters consequent might have been avoided. But are not our lives governed by a series of plans so systematic that no change or chance can be possible? On my return my friends were in full gossip over the wedding. Never had the city witnessed so gorgeous an affair. Every arrangement was as perfect as the beauty of the bridal pair, which could not be exaggerated. I found cards awaiting me. At the 'Von Brust House' was neatly engraved in a corner. I had not learned by the saddest experience that can befall a human being fully to ap-

preciate the horror of that name. I hoped to myself, however, that they had avoided the devil's room, not deeming it probable that the proprietor would explain the superstition connected with it.

"I called at the Von Brust House. Ada Lucia sent for me immediately, and met me at the door, with a pale face. Interpreting the glance I gave at her hand, for there was blood on it, she laughed nervously as she said:

"Poor Leon has had a great fright. He was cutting a pear for me with a very sharp knife. The knife slipped, and by some inexplicable manoeuvre, which he could not explain, went into his wrist, here. It struck a vein, and he has bled terribly; however, the doctor says he will do well now, and has bound the wound up nicely."

"But in what part of the hotel are you?" I asked, scarcely listening to the details of the accident.

"We are in the west-end. There is my bedchamber. Is it not beautiful? The hangings are Leon's taste, and the only new thing about it. As for the darling old furniture, I would not have allowed it to be disturbed for worlds, for it is the chief charm of the whole."

"I was bewildered—it certainly was the same—that strangely, wickedly-haunted room, and yet I had never known it to be connected with a suite; but assuredly there was the heavy door standing open, and the perfume of early summer flowers that hung in golden swings from the windows and the ceiling softly wafted through.

"This is curious," I said; "it must be the same room, and I shuddered, for the thought of exposing these happy, thoughtless creatures to the possibility of a curse-caused blight made me sick at heart."

"My dear, do you enjoy that room?" I asked.

"Indeed, I do, my friend. I took a fancy to it the first time I saw it. It was my choice. Leon wished to go lower down, but this one room bewitched and decided me. I have always worshipped the antique. It is a spell laid upon my nature which I cannot throw off. Don't you see even the hangings, though fresh and new, seem to assimilate? 'Tis an old Louis pattern, and has a Pompadour gorgeousness that is quite enchanting to my taste. Mamma laughed at me, saying they were out of fashion, but I never care for that, you know."

"And does Leon, does your husband fancy this room?"

"Yes, but, queer fellow, he always complains of a chilly feeling. I am warm enough, and in proportion as his spirits go down, mine go up."

"What, then, is he low-spirited here?"

"I fancy he will not confess to it, however, and I always laugh the humour out of him."

"But, my child, I wonder you didn't take apartments on the lower floor. I—did the landlord say nothing about the—well, say unhealthiness of this room?"

"Unhealthiness?" She looked at me, puzzled. "He said nothing about that. There was some absurd thing or other about it's being unlucky, at which both Leon and I laughed, it seemed so ridiculous."

"And yet he has just met with an accident."

"Leon—yes; one that might have happened anywhere," she said, her face growing grave. "As for superstitions, she and Leon were quite too far in advance of the age to have any belief in them."

"No, but such things have been, dear, and doubtless you have heard the name of the room more than once."

"She interrupted me. "The name of the room?" she asked, hastily.

"Yes, the devil's chamber," I replied.

"I have heard something about it," she said, "but I never thought it was that one. Still it is, after all, only a silly superstition. Perhaps this wound of Leon's may expiate my rashness in choosing a precinct so sacred to diabolism," she added, laughingly. "I shook my head, but it only set her laughing still more joyously, and I left her, thankful that she looked upon the matter with such merry light-heartedness, yet, nevertheless, feeling some fearful forebodings that I could not quite conquer.

"Six months passed, merry as a marriage-bell, and Ada Lucia called for me to go and see her new-furnished house, the little palace, she said, which her father had given her. 'So you see,' she added, 'we shall soon leave the devil's chamber. And yet, perhaps you will laugh at me, but I have actually had a room arranged in my little palace almost exactly like it. Father thinks it is splendid, only, he says, let him smoke in it when he comes to see me, because the surroundings are so harmonious with a smoker's ease and refinement. Of course I could refuse him nothing, the darling! Don't you think we shall be almost too happy?' she exclaimed, the slightest shade of anxiety disturbing the angelic calm of her features, as she stopped short in her rounds, and turned towards me.

I could not speak, for I, too, had once trod as if on air, through the splendours of my bridal home; and since then, upon what grave-edges had I stood and looked down, as it were, upon the burial of all my hopes? She noticed my altered face.

On the morrow she was to take possession of her new house. The servants had been engaged and installed by her mother, who parted with a few of her own well-trained and attached domestics; the house put in complete order, and only needing the addition of the fair mistress to make it a perfect establishment.

"At two, a carriage came tearing up to the door, I was to accompany the messenger back directly. Mrs. Leon Hamlin had met with a terrible accident, and her mother, who was almost helpless from grief, wished for my advice and assistance.

"It is needless to say that I hurried off on my errand of mercy, trembling and fearful, and sick at heart. When I arrived there, the place was in commotion. I was ushered up-stairs, and there, in the anteroom of that frightful chamber, I found them all. Lucia was lying on the lounge insensible. Upon the left temple, disfiguring its snowy whiteness, was a small blue mark. The story was soon told. Seated in her favourite room—the devil's chamber, alas!—under a portrait, the portrait of that evil man, it had, by some means, become loosened from its nail, mysteriously, as all things happen there, fallen and struck her temple, and her life was blasted, if not the immediate forfeit. A brain fever followed, and, on her recovery of bodily health, the mind was shattered beyond repair. She is living; her husband died years ago, a broken-hearted, disappointed man; her father and mother are bowed down by sorrow, and grey with grief—not with years."

"A mournful story, indeed," I said, warned by the clock upon the mantel-piece that it was time for me to retire.

"Yes, and but for the lateness of the hour. I could tell you more," she replied.

"No more to-night, if you please," was my rejoinder, and I could feel the corners of my mouth tremble when I essayed to smile.

It was a strange, new sensation for me to feel nervous. I had always prided myself on my un-impressibility, and had been the subject of several jokes that upon men less firm of purpose would have resulted in the most cruel effects, but a certain something, I do not know what to call it (it surely was not fear), made me crawl through every nerve and fibre of my body. With this there was a sense of shame at my weakness, if weakness it may be called, which deterred me from naming my trouble to anyone present. And yet it was with absolute dread that I said good-night, and turned from the steps, uncertain what to do. I experienced, with all, an irresistible inclination to sleep in that very room. Somehow I was impelled to test, by my own experience, whether there was any reality in the influence of a demon's curse. What I had heard might have happened anywhere, and doubtless these were but isolated cases, for it must have happened that many scores of people during all those years had occupied that chamber without injuring either themselves or others. The more I thought of this as I walked along rather aimlessly, the more anxious I was to try the experiment. There was a fascination in the thought of wooing danger that I could not resist, and gradually I found myself nearing the place.

I had left orders to have a fire kindled at nine o'clock to take off the chill air; it was now striking twelve by the city clock. How heavily the vibrations seemed to pulse along the air! I could almost feel them shake me.

"Give me the key of my room," I said, hastily.

He turned to a small arrangement of brass-headed nails and keys as he asked me for my number.

"Forty-nine," I answered, carelessly.

He turned round and surveyed me with a fixed stare.

"Are you the gentleman that's taken forty-nine?"

"Why, is there anything remarkable in that?" I asked, rather amused at his manner.

"Oh, no, nothing remarkable as I know of," he answered, after having satisfied himself by an inspection of my person, perhaps coming to the conclusion that there was no insanity in my look. "Oh, no, not at all, only that's a queer room that is up there; lots o' people die in that there room," with which comforting assurance he proceeded to light me up-stairs.

"Go in and see to the fire," I said, as he stopped at the door.

With a frightened look, he said, "I ain't the one that attends to such things, but I'll send him up," but before I could speak again, he had vanished.

Entering the room with all the alacrity I could muster, I looked around me to make sure there was no ghostly presence there. Instead of that, the remnants of a good fire sent their flickering flames, pale, red, blue-edged, up the mouth of the chimney, reflecting themselves cheerfully upon the broad ornaments of the brass fender. The shadows had grouped themselves pleasantly together, the bed looked harmless and inviting, with its snowy spread and moveless curtains; everything pleased me but the sinister dark eyes of that portrait on the wall. They, with their luminous orbs, with a fiery spot in the centre, followed me everywhere. I began to feel uneasy from the moment I noticed them. What a capacity had the man with such a face to love or

hate? The stern lines round the mouth whose full lips were so tender might grow rigid with curses, or soft and gentle with the smile of affection rightly rewarded and fully appreciated. I saw in my mind's eye the ill-fated bride with the disfiguring purple mark upon her temple; I remembered that after one night's occupation in this evil room, if evil it was, the young, high-hearted Lucia met with her death, and now I had for a second time dared its terrors.

There was wood piled up by the side of the hearth. I threw it on, log after log, with a reckless forgetfulness of coming want, and drawing the antique armchair forward, resolutely placed my back to the picture. Vain precaution! Those satanic eyes pierced through my brain, and in their lurid light there seemed to sit a savage joy, alternating with diabolical fury. Do what I would, I could not rid myself of that impression. I arose and walked the room, thinking of all the ghostly stories I had ever heard in my life. Things to which before I had attached no manner of significance assumed an almost tangible reality now, and fairly haunted me with a persistence I tremble to think of to this day. I examined the doors, still keeping that portrait out of sight as much as possible. The door communicating with other apartments was visible only after close inspection, for it was hidden by the high back of the bedstead, which nearly touched the ceiling. The other locked with a bolt and a key. The bolt I had drawn after I entered. The carpet had been originally of a splendid texture, and much of the colour still remained firm. If the murders had been committed in this room, they must have been effected by strangulation and poison, otherwise there would have been spots upon the carpet as hard to be removed as the indelible stains upon Lady Macbeth's hand.

After awhile I took a strange pleasure in grouping the characters in this terrible tragedy. The young and beautiful creature whom he took from her innocent country life, where stood or sat she when he entered with the look of a fiend? No mercy in those stony eyes. I turned to them; it seemed as if their expression had changed to that same hate, and still they mocked and followed me. But there were two victims of his vengeance. Where did he dispatch the other—the man—young, passionate, perhaps criminal? Did he bring them face to face, and while their souls were racked with the horror of suspense, did he there consummate his revenge, waiting till one had seen the death agonies of the other? And after the deed was done, felt he any compunction, any remorse?

"No!"

Was that a voice that chilled my blood and lifted my hair? Certainly it sounded like one, but the dead cannot speak—it must have echoed only in the chambers of my imagination. The clock struck one. I roused myself from my unhealthy reverie, decided to pass the night in the chair before the fire, and, as I felt no inclination to slumber, I took out some letters I was in the habit of carrying about me, and began to read. Will it be believed that I was here assailed by the conviction that somebody was looking over my shoulder, and reading the sacred lines which no eye but mine had ever perused? And yet I could not help the fancy, if you will call it so, and so real did it seem, that I several times changed my position, and at last, in despair of enjoying them myself, folded them up with a feeling like desperation, and thrust them into their old receptacle. I felt so thoroughly uncomfortable by this time, that I would gladly have gone elsewhere had it been possible, for I was not alone. I had never before experienced the feeling that now assailed me. I had always enjoyed the pleasant consciousness of my own individuality—now I felt, as some people say they do in certain diseases, as if myself sat somewhere near myself, and yet the two distinct beings thought and felt alike.

I kept the fire burning, and closing my eyes, got once in awhile snatches of sleep, but it was not refreshing. Mingled with all sorts of dreams seemed the sonorous clanging of bells, the cries of men, the rolling of ponderous machines through the street. My visions were fearful, and it did not appear quite possible to disconnect them from my waking moments. It was a dull, leaden apathy, as if caused by an atmospheric pressure, that had taken possession of my faculties, and into which I sank deeper and deeper with a sort of eagerness, for the sensation was at first a pleasurable one, only to start with horror from some swooning fall or threatened danger.

As I waked up the last time, I became conscious that the fire was out, but that, nevertheless, there was a clear red light in the room, that must have come from the outside. A little startled at first, I soon saw, on going to the window, the same ruddy light upon a near steeple, and the distant twanging of bells conyinced me that there was a fire somewhere near.

Glad of an excuse for vacating that room, I hurried down-stairs and out into the lighted street. I cannot describe the sensation I experienced upon feeling the clear cold air rush into my lungs. It seemed like coming out of a stifling vapour-bath. Hurrying onwards I soon came in the vicinity of the fire. Two houses

were already consumed and fallen in the midst of a fearful shower of ashes and coals, and blasts of hot, black smoke. The streets on every side were lined with people and furniture. Children and women were wailing, men and boys shouting, screaming, and enjoying the spectacle to the top of their bent. The air was thick with whirling fragments of soot, and threads of burnt dry goods. From the body of a large house, the red tongues of flame licked all the air dry, and the stones were hot under the feet. I was in just the state to enter madly into the savage enjoyment of the scene.

Suddenly there was a terrible shout close to my ear, a woman in the burning house: "Look, look!" Sure enough, there, at the second story, stood a poor creature, slight and young, and she was perishing in the flames! Would none go? It was a terrible risk. The ladder was placed, the hot flames crawling stealthily but surely about the wan face. I could bear it no longer. I clutched the wrung and ran up the ladder in the very embrace of the coiling, lapping tongues of fire. Nearer and nearer I drew to the window where she stood. The flames touched me, scorched me, but I did not know it. I felt the strength of a giant. I was near her—she, frantic as death, drew steadily near—was willing to do anything to save herself. Assisting her, I had her out on the ladder, there was a shout, a sheet of white flame silvered everything as if enveloping the universe, there was an agonizing sensation of mortal terror, a groan of wild horror from the surging multitude, and I knew nothing more.

My life was spared, but she was killed. How time passed I knew not. They told me I was unconscious for days. Awaking, weak, faint, bruised, sore, I could dimly distinguish objects. The dear face of Adela met my first conscious glance.

"How is it?" I whispered, feebly.

"Hush dear, you are not to talk. You have been ill, injured, and oh, it was so great, so noble of you!"

"What was great and noble?" I wonderingly inquired.

"The way you tried to save that poor creature."

"Ah! I remember now—the fire."

"Oh, don't speak of it," she shuddered. "How could you sleep in that terrible chamber? We found it out afterwards."

"Ah! the devil's chamber. Adela, dear, I believe it!"

"If you had only believed it before," said a familiar voice. "We old people, who have experience, warn you thoughtless creatures in vain; you will live the experience yourselves, or else never believe. Well, well, I hope this has cured you. But they say you behaved nobly in trying to save a poor woman; the whole press is ringing with it."

"And did I?"

"No; the poor thing fell further in than you did, and could not be recovered."

"What! did I fall into the fire?"

"Yes."

"And am I disfigured?"

"Not in my eyes," said Adela, the tears streaming over her beautiful checks. "Every scar will be beautiful to me."

I recovered, and before many moons had waned, I was a happy bridegroom, and have since experienced no disaster from the Devil's Chamber. M. A. D.

SCIENCE.

NON-CONDUCTING COMPOSITIONS; FOR PREVENTING THE RADIATION OF HEAT FROM STEAM BOILERS, CYLINDERS, &c.—Feltig is very generally used for this purpose, it being a good non-conducting agent, but we have also known of plaster mixed with hair, covered with sheet metal, being employed for boilers. A cheap and convenient good non-conductor for such purposes is very desirable; and J. Spence, of the naval dockyard at Portsmouth, has lately taken out a patent for such. It consists of 1,000 lbs. by weight of clay made into a pasty consistency with water, 24 lbs. of oil-cake, 3 gallons of fish-oil, 24 lbs. of cow-hair, 24 lbs. of soot, and 3 lbs. of bone-dust. These are made into a plastic condition and applied like plaster to walls. This is used for covering boilers. For covering cylinders of engines a few more pounds of oil-cake are added, and six times the quantity of bone-dust. A primary coating is first put on with a trowel to the depth of three-fourths of an inch; when dry, another coat of the same thickness is laid on, and when this is dry, it receives a third coat of a composition consisting of 1,000 lbs. of clay, 2 gallons of fish-oil, 32 lbs. of cow-hair, half a gallon of linseed oil, 24 lbs. of ground charcoal, 8 lbs. of melted glue, and 8 lbs. of any desirable paint. This non-conducting cement may be bonded and covered with wood laths, on boilers and cylinders, while steam-pipes may be covered with bands of straw saturated in the composition.

THEORY OF THE CAUSE OF BOILER EXPLOSIONS.—AN EXAMINATION OF CONSIDERABLE INTEREST INTO THE CAUSE OF BOILER EXPLOSIONS, has been made by Mr. Robert Rigby, jun., of Audley, Staffordshire. As the result of

his investigations and experience, he enunciates the theory that the cause of boilers exploding is the sudden ignition of gases within the boiler. He considers that the manner in which the gases are produced is, that when the water falls below the highest point in the boiler which is acted on by the fire, the plates of the boiler above the water-line become heated, and decompose the steam in contact with them into its component gases, oxygen and hydrogen. These gases, in consequence of their great affinity, being in the exact proportions or quantities to form water, are of a most explosive character, and only require a plate to become red-hot, or a communication by a flaw in the boiler with the fire, to ignite them, when a violent explosion takes place by their uniting again to form water. This theory has the advantage over the others for two reasons: first, because the only condition requisite to produce these gases is the water getting low in the boiler, which has been invariably the case in all the boiler explosions that have come under his notice; and secondly, because the uniting of these gases in a confined vessel like a boiler will produce results corresponding with those accompanying what are very correctly called boiler explosions. He observes that boilers bursting from an over-pressure and expansion of steam, and boilers exploding, are as distinct as they are different in the effects produced by them—the one merely gives an outlet for the steam and water, the other blows the boiler to pieces, and scatters it in all directions.

FACETIA.

MRS. ELDERBERRY says there must be a great many children killed on battle-fields, as there are always so many small arms found after a fight.

ADVICE GRATIS.—An anxious mother writes to know what is the best dress for her little son John? We should say a jacket.—*Punch*.

LOST.—Somewhere between sunrise and sunset, two golden hours, each set with sixty diamond minutes. No reward is offered, for they are lost for ever.

EXTRAORDINARY SHOOTING.—A clerk of the Artillery Department at Woolwich, having been found to be a great bore, was loaded with reproaches by his fellow-clerks, and discharged by his chief. The report shook the neighbourhood, and will shortly be printed.—*Punch*.

A YOUNG gentleman having made some progress in acquiring a knowledge of Italian, addressed a few words to an organ-grinder in his purest accent, but was astonished at receiving the following response, "I no speak Ingli."

RURAL SIMPLICITY.—A young man and a female once upon a time stopped at a country tavern. Their awkward appearance excited the attention of one of the family, who commenced a conversation with the female by inquiring how far she had travelled that day? "Travelled!" exclaimed the stranger, somewhat indignant, "we didn't travel! we rid!"

LAST FROM ST. MARTIN'S-LE-GRAND.—If a post-office clerk plays truant, and goes to the Alexandra Park, why can't Sir Rowland blow him up? Because the young fellow takes the way to Muzzle Hill.—*Punch*.

Two women were having some words together on the roadside, when the daughter of one of them popped her head out of the door and cried out, "Hurry, mother, and call her a thief before she calls you one."

A NEW READING OF A NEW BOOK.—A work by Liebig has just appeared, with the title, "The Natural Laws of Husbandry." Mrs. Smith says they could be contained in much smaller space. She asserts that the natural laws of husbandry are, "Not to stop out late, and never to grumble at cold meat."—*Punch*.

A COUPLE of farmers met at a tavern, and in the course of conversation they gave their respective experiences in cattle breeding. "I had the biggest ox in the county," said one of them, "a very big ox—I never saw one as large before. You can guess how big he was, when, after he was killed, I took two hundred and seventy-eight pounds of fat out of him." The other listened attentively till the last marvellous statement was made, when he broke in with: "A very big ox, that of yours, mister; I had a very big ox not long since, but he warn't nearly as large as yours, and we didn't get as much fat as you; but, sir," he continued, with emphasis, "when we did kill that ox, we got out of him eighty-six pounds of pure bacon." "I say, mister," chimed in a dry old boot, "that ere whacks your story, anyhow!"

THE BATTLE OF THE TOLL-BARS.—Victory! Victory! A great battle has been fought, and the Northerners (of London) have won. Led by General Bradfield, they have bravely waged their exterminating warfare, and have swept away no fewer than five-and-twenty pikes. Six-and-fifty side-bars have also fallen before them, and the gallant toll reformers now may

boast that in the north of town their triumph is complete. All true friends of progress will exult at this success, and will hope to see the Southerners long achieve the like. A terrible enemy to comfort is the turnpike-gate, and one that it behoves all men of sense to fight against. So we trust that the late victory will be promptly followed up, and that the gallant General Bradfield will soon win another laurel-wreath. It has taken him eight years to smash the turnpikes in North London; but we hope that in the South, the foe will not be quite so obstinate. To carry on his operations, he of course requires support; on his side, success is certain. "Toll for the brave" was once the poet's proposition; but "No toll for the brave" is General Bradfield's stern demand, and he is not the man to rest till what he asks has been complied with.—*Punch*.

A GENTLEMAN, not long since, wishing to pop the question, did it in the following singular manner: Taking up the young lady's cat, he said, "Puss, may I have your mistress?" It was answered by the lady, who said, "Say yes, Puss."

THE BEST OF ALBERT MONUMENTS.—It is announced that the people of Belfast intend to erect a stately clock-tower as the local memorial to Prince Albert. This design shows Belfast a great deal faster than it was generally thought to be. Belfast indeed may be said to be a bell as fast as the clock which it proposes to dedicate to the memory of the Prince Consort. There is a smart gracefulness in the idea of a testimonial which will indicate the Prince to be a man of all time.—*Punch*.

"Why don't you get married?" said a young lady, the other day, to a bachelor friend. "I have been trying for the last ten years to find some one who would be silly enough to have me," was the reply. "You haven't been our way," was the insinuating rejoinder.

A NURSERY RHYME FOR LITTLE RUSSIANS.

ENGLAND, joined with France,
Can teach the bear to dance,
To turn about and twist about, and skip, and hop, and
prance!
If they take up the Pole,
The monster to control,
They'll beat him till he sores all o'er, from stubborn
head to sole!
So if all human laws
He scorns, and treats with flaws,
Why, then, instead of claws and jaws, they'll make
the creature pause. —*Punch*.

One of the field-officers of the 19th Wisconsin rode up to head-quarters, his horse reeking with foam from hard riding, dismounted, and threw the rein to an attendant, saying, "Feed him." "Is he not too warm to feed now?" inquired the attendant. "No, you may feed him with impunity," replied the officer. "Impunity!" exclaimed the attendant; "the quartermaster has furnished the usual quantity of forage, but never a pound of impunity."

LATEST FROM PRUSSIA.

HALF A SCORE more newspapers have been suppressed by the police for the very sufficing reasons which we here subjoin:—

For saying that King William shook his head last Wednesday, but there is reason to suppose that there was nothing in it.

For saying that in England a person may talk politics without being beheaded for it.

For criticising the appearance of Bockum Dollis his hat, and repeating a report that some one had been somewhere heard to say he wore a white one.

For quoting the statement in Joe Miller's English history, that King Charles the First walked and talked half-an-hour after his head was cut off.

For using the word "beheaded" in a leading article about the King of Dahomey, it being obvious that King William was the personage referred to.

For prophesying that the time will come when Prussia will no longer have a thoroughly free press.

For saying that a Policeman was found last week in London in the act of kissing a cook: this statement being invented with the view to bring discredit upon police-constables in general, and those in Prussia in particular.

For stating as a fact in Natural History, that a cat may look at a King, even though he be a Prussian one.—*Punch*.

NOT EASILY FRIGHTENED.

The shepherd's wife, who attends to the wants of travellers at Birkhill, Scotland, is a character worth knowing. She is strong-minded and strong-nerved; and a number of authentic anecdotes are told of her prowess. The following is one of the best:—

Her house is solitary, no other dwelling being within miles of it, and during the day, when her husband and son are on the hills, she has sometimes strange visitors, for the road passing through that district. When the Hawick Branch of the North British Railway was making,

navvies often passed this way from the Caledonian line towards Hawick, and of these she generally had a call. A solitary Irish navvy came in one day when she was alone, saving a little girl, a grandchild. After lighting his pipe, and staring round him for a time, the following dialogue ensued:—

"Well, missus," said he, "you've some mighty nice hams there."

"Nice hams," was the dry response.

"Fair, I think I'll have one, missus!"

"But ye'll no get aye, my man." Pat, nothing daunted, put his foot upon a stool for the purpose of taking one down from the ceiling, where they hung, and he did so boldly, for he saw no one was in the house but the woman and child. With a stern face, however, she suddenly stepped before him, and said:

"Did any body see ye come in here?"

"The devil a one," was answered, defiantly.

"And the devil a one'll see ye gang out again! Bring me the axe, lassie!" In a moment the blackguard was out at the door and off, leaving her to enjoy a hearty laugh at the success of her ruse.

DANCING.—The old step, that we now everywhere find going out, is the door-step.—*Punch*.

A PRETTY THING INDEED.—This is what we find in a newspaper paragraph, not printed in red ink as it ought to be, but unblushingly presented in the ordinary way:—"AUSTRALIAN RIFLEMEN.—A short time ago a challenge was received in England from an Australian battalion of volunteers to shoot an equal number of volunteers in this country." We further find that the challenge has been accepted, and that the congenial "popping" month of September has been named for the time when this little affair is to come off. This is colonial reciprocity with a vengeance. There has been nothing like it since the song-writer told us how

"The soldier leaned upon his sword
And wiped away a (volun)teer."

The Australian rifleman has the character of having great ability to take an aim, but we should have preferred his having greater aim-ability of character. Volunteers, look out!—*Punch*.

MANY a clever fellow, who thought he had an exact knowledge of the whole human race, has been miserably cheated in the choice of a wife.

NEEDLES AND PINS.—A muscular member of the Alpine Club writes to say, that in climbing the summit of the *Needles* he has reached the *pinnacle* of his ambition.—*Punch*.

FIRST SHOE-BLACK: Bill, how do you like my ring? Gave sixpence for it. Second ditto: Oh they looked pretty well when they first came out—but they ain't the fashion now. Got too common, every loafer wears them.

A GROWL FROM THE BRITISH LION.—It is singular that as Trafalgar Square is still without its lions, the finest site in Europe should fail in discovering where they are. No soers, from a *Zadkiel* to a *Land-seer*, can tell where the promise is that referred to one lion made and to re-lion the others to follow immediately.—*Punch*.

SHOWMAN: There, my little man, you now behold a grand triumph of art. Directly in the centre of the group you will perceive the portrait of our revolutionary fathers. Upon the right of the picture you will discover the names of those heroes who have distinguished themselves during the present rebellion, and also an honest politician. Boy (with anxiety): Which is the politician? Showman: You must look over the left for him. You'll find him there!

SHADOWS OF THE WEEK.

ALTHOUGH Sir Edwin Landseer has determined the size, shape and position of the Nelson Column lions, he has as yet only got as far as the paws in his work.

In answer to numerous inquiries, we beg to inform the curious upon the subject, that during practice time in the hot weather the members of the Honourable Artillery Company do not drink iced coddanons.

Mr. W. A. Matthews, of Sheffield, has determined to establish some large cutlery works in the Falkland Islands. Henceforth the Geographical Society have decided that they shall be known on the map as Knife-and-Falkland Islands.

A new umbrella is to be opened very speedily by the Lord Mayor: he is merely waiting for the first favourable day.

We were, a paragraph ago, mentioning umbrellas; we will, in returning to the subject, announce that an eminent member of the bar, after an extensive mess dinner on circuit, took Silk (somebody else's) and left Stuff (his own).

The Royal Academicians have held an extra meeting, Several propositions seriously affecting the interests of Art have been adopted. We hear that the President feels inclined to sanction the introduction of Lay Figures as members of the Committee. A second

minute is, that when works are not to be hung, the painters will not be kept in suspense as to their fate.

Talking of painters, the metropolitan plumbers are going to give a dinner in honour of Mr. Glaisher. They have asked him to take the chair, and he has kindly given his twentieth balloon ascent to their request.

The Maories, we hear from private sources, have entirely altered their places with regard to the "King-movement"; they wish to imitate the city folk, and have one man in authority over them, who shall be called the Lord Maori.

The Jockey Club have decided that a professional Book-maker, after making his book, shall consider his engagement as Binding.—*Punch*.

THE YOUNG YANKEE.—A late lecturer remarked that it would not be a very violent stretch of the imagination to believe "that a Massachusetts baby, six months old, sits in its mother's lap, eyeing his own cradle, to see if he could not invent a better, or, at least, suggest some improvement."

RATHER COOL FOR THE SEASON.—In the advertising columns of the *Times* the other day we dropped upon the following:—A professor of German wishes to sell his connexions in a fashionable watering place, worth about £200 a year, for £50 ready money. Address, &c. We have heard of a man selling his friends, but this cool mode of disposing of all his acquaintances for a fourth of their value shows the German professor to be a wholesale dealer in humanity. We shall be happy to bid "good-bye" for the professor.—*Fun*.

STOWE IT!—Mrs. Beecher Stowe has been writing a ridiculous, unreasoning rhapsody to some Edinburgh ladies, almost as silly as herself, about the Yankee Emancipation Crusade. The close of her letter is very funny. She says: "I am cramped and confined by neuralgia, which is brought on by writing, and cannot say much." We understand the last part of this, because we have seen sufferers from neuralgia holding their jaws, but that this nervous affection is brought on by writing is quite new to us—unless it be the writing of draughts.—*Fun*.

A NEW MODE OF BEGGING.

The *Courier de Paris* tells the story of a beggar who presented himself regularly at a certain coffee-house, with a clarinet under his arm.

"Will you allow me, gentlemen," said he, in a humble tone of voice, "to play a tune? I am no virtuoso, and if you prefer giving me a trifle, I will spare you the annoyance of listening to me."

Every one felt at once for a few stray coppers, and the musician departed with a profound reverence. This he repeated several evenings in succession. At last, one evening, a young man, who had never failed to contribute to the wants of the itinerant musician, asked him in a friendly manner to give them a tune, let it be good or bad; he wanted to hear him.

"But I am afraid, sir, I shall disappoint you."

"Never mind that, give us a tune."

"But I am a very poor player, and I have a very poor instrument."

"No matter for that, I want to hear you."

"Well, sir, since you insist upon it," said the poor man, "I will tell you that I don't play at all. I carry this clarinet merely for the purpose of threatening people with my performance."

OUT-OF-DOOR GAMEMASTER AND SUMMER SPORTING REGISTER.—*Buying a Horse*.—If you don't understand it, observe the following rules: when the horse is trotted out for your inspection, fold your arms, frown, shake your head; listen to the dealer's remarks as if you didn't believe a word he said; pass your hand carefully down the horse's fore leg; take two paces back and shake your head again; pinch his neck and give a dubious "Hem!" as if in doubt as to his condition; turn to the groom, and in an off-hand manner say, "Just walk him up again, will you?" you may then commit yourself so far as to observe, "Yes, he's got some nice points," and leave the rest to another visit, when you can bring a horsey friend, perhaps a Cavalry Horsey, who will give you all the necessary information.—*Getting off*.—This may be performed in various ways. Over the Head or the Tail as you like; those who try to adopt these methods of dismounting, very often never get over it.—*Punch*.

STATISTICS.

Two hundred and ninety-seven joint-stock companies, with limited liability, have been registered in England in the first half of the year 1863. Thirty-three of them are banking companies. The nominal capital proposed for these banking companies was more than £18,000,000.

THE Armstrong guns supplied by the Elswick Ordnance Company to the Government have cost in all £234,660 6s. The guns supplied from Woolwich have cost £445,205 7s. 9d. The Armstrong shot and shell, including fuses, supplied by the Elswick Company cost £414,194 5s. The shot and shell supplied from Wool-

wich cost £142,930 8s. 7d.; making a total (exclusive of any expenditure which may have been incurred for machinery, alterations, repairs, and fittings required for the manufacture of Armstrong guns) of £1,896,990 7s. 4d.

THE HOUSE DUTY.—There is some curious information in a Parliamentary return moved for by Mr. Icock King, respecting the number of houses assessed to the house duty in the year ending the 5th of April, 1862. The total number of houses is 519,991; and the total amount of inhabited house duty, £813,332. The returns for Middlesex are interesting as showing its vast wealth in comparison with other counties. It has 47,594 houses under £30 rent per year, which is the first head; and one under the last, where the rent is fixed at the moderate sum of £20,000. The next highest rental is in East Surrey, where there is one entry of £2,200. The lowest return is from the county of Radnor, in which the return states there are 86 houses under £30, 40 under £50, 10 under £100, and 1 under £150. The totals under the following rents are:—Under £30, 205,528; £50, 169,920; £100, 101,948; £150, 25,128; £200, 7,678; £250, 4,126; £300, 1,793; £350, 1,332; £400, 573; £450, 526; £500, 282; £550, 294; £600, 128; £650, 167; £700, 60; £750, 91; £800, 51; £850, 57; £900, 26; £950, 36; £1,060, 14; £1,050, 55; £1,100, 16; £1,150, 10; £1,200, 7; £1,250, 20; £1,300, 4; £1,350, 9; £1,400, 5; £1,450, 9; £1,500, 3.

MAN THE ONLY MISER.

THE lark sings gaily to the morning clouds,

While swiftly soaring in the regions high—

The nightingale in music tells his love,

Unto the heavenly watchers of the sky;

The flowers hide not their beauty from the sight,

Nor their pure fragrance to the world deny

But yield fair homes to many insects bright,

And bless with sweets each breeze that passes by.

The sun his warmth and brightness freely sheds

On ocean, river, city, hill, and dale;

And of his plenty gives the queenly moon,

While she on earth bestows her brilliance pale;

The stars smile softly as with speed descend

Their dancing rays, to gladden care-clad night;

The northern lights in Lapland's winter shine,

A daylight making in the sun's despite.

Th' electric flash that gleams athwart the sky,

Becomes man's messenger and bears his will;

As swift as thought to countries distant far,

And crosses seas his bidding to fulfil.

The river winding like a silver chain,

Makes fruitful all the land thro' which it winds;

The clouds pour down their fertilising rain,

On which the fulness of the ear depends.

The snow-crown'd mountains, and the dusky mines,

Unfold their riches at the call of man;

Strong iron, silver, precious gold, rare gems;

And fuel growing since the world began.

The trees that stretch their strong arms to the wind,

Give leafy shelter to the birds of air;

And bear rich fruits of various shape and kind,

And juices yield most useful and most rare.

Man, only man, his treasures doth conceal,

And hides them up for solitary joy;

As if kind heaven ever yet conferred

A blessing that he ought not to employ!

All gifts received should freely be diffused,

Not idly hid to please one mortal will;

For talents, wealth, and knowledge are abused,

Unless they aid earth's onward sails to fill!

C. B.

GEMS.

To conciliate is so infinitely more agreeable than to offend, that it is worth some sacrifice of individual will.

INGRATITUDE is a crime so shameful, that there was never yet one found that would acknowledge himself guilty of it.

THE wisest men have their follies, the best their failings, and the most temperate have now and then their excesses.

To speak ill of a man in his absence, shows a base mind; and to do so to his face, is adding an affront to the scandal.

If the cat had wings, no bird would be left in the air. If every one had what he is wishing who would have anything!

WISDOM is an ocean that has no shore; its prospect is not terminated by an horizon; its centre is everywhere, and its circumference nowhere.

THE deepest waters move most silently; the hottest fires have the smallest flames; and the spheres that have the swiftest motion, move without noise.

CHILDHOOD is like a mirror, catching and reflecting images all around it. Remember that an impious, pro-

fane, or vulgar thought may operate upon a young heart like a careless spray of water thrown upon polished steel, staining it with rust that no after-efforts can efface.

THE true way of reaching the right is through the heart of the wrong; he who goes round it finds but the other side of the wrong, and the wrong side of right.

THERE are many men who appear to be struggling against adversity, and yet are happy; but yet more, who, although abounding in wealth, are miserable.

WOMEN's ignorance of their duties, and the abuse which they make of their power, deprive them of the most beautiful and precious of their advantages, that of being useful.

MISCELLANEOUS.

THE hinges of the new oaken door lately put up at Hereford Cathedral cost £140.

IT has been stated that the Italian Government had offered an army contingent for Poland in case of war.

BLONDIN left Southampton for Gibraltar in the Ripon steamer on Monday. From Gibraltar, the hero of Niagara proceeds to Cadiz.

PRINCE NAPOLEON has presented to the Louvre several Egyptian antiquities of great archeological value, which he lately brought home from the East.

A THING almost, if not altogether, unparalleled in the history of the Perth Barracks has occurred within the past few days—three soldiers belonging to one branch of the troops stationed here having received the punishment of flogging for the crime of desertion.

IT is said that every difficulty which appeared to lie in the way of a common understanding and a common action, on the part of those who are interested in an appropriate celebration of Shakespeare's birthday, in April of next year, has been removed.

IN spite of the energetic opposition of the citizens, the Press, and the Corporation, the London, Chatham, and Dover Railway Company still threaten to span Ludgate Hill—the chief thoroughfare of the City—with a "barbarous and unsightly viaduct."

THE new church of All Saints, Aldershot, erected for the use of the permanent barracks, has been consecrated by the Bishop of Winchester, in the presence of a great number of the military officers and gentlemen of the neighbourhood.

THE total loss of the steamer Paris, belonging to the Newhaven and Jersey line, has been announced. The Paris struck on the Grunott Rock, near Elizabeth Castle, off Jersey, at nine a.m. on the 29th ult., and sank immediately. The passengers and crew are saved.

PREPARATIONS have been made in anticipation of a visit by their Royal Highnesses the Prince of Wales and the Duke of Cambridge. Pontoon-bridges have been constructed across the Royal Military Canal between Shorecliffe and Hythe, and it is expected that a field-day will take place on a grand scale.

HER Majesty leaves Osborne for Windsor Castle on Monday the 10th August. The Queen will remain at the Castle until the following Wednesday, when her Majesty will take her departure for Germany. The Queen will be absent from this country for nearly a month.

THOSE who still fondly cling to the belief that the North is warring for the abolition of slavery would do well to mark the incidents which attended the recent popular demonstrations in New York. The negroes, wherever met, were indiscriminately sacrificed to the fury of the mob.

A parliamentary return recently issued states that during the last three years, ending 30th June last, 94 non-commissioned officers have received commissions in the army. They are described thus:—Cavalry 12; Royal Artillery, 18; Royal Engineers, 1; Military Train, 2; Foot-Guards, 2; Infantry, 59.

It is generally believed the Governments of England, France, and Austria have agreed as to the next step to be taken with regard to the attitude the Powers are about to assume towards Russia. A joint and identical note is to be addressed without delay to the Cabinet of St. Petersburg.

A LADY has just died at Agen at the advanced age of 106. She was twice married, and enjoyed the full exercise of her mental faculties until a few months before her death. In 1814, at the age of fifty-seven, she bought an annuity of 2,400*l.* per annum for a sum of 24,000*l.*, and for which she has received 117,600*l.*

THE old officers of the Coastguard are cheering up under the influence of a rumour which has been widely spread, that the majority of the members of the Committee on Naval Promotion and Retirement are in favour of recommending two-thirds of the time required in the Coastguard as sea-time. This will be a boon that can scarcely be appreciated except by those chiefly interested. It will gladden many a home.—*Army and Navy Gazette*.

NOTICE.

THE SHAKESPEARE GALLERY.

The public are respectfully informed that every purchaser of No. 7 of THE LONDON READER was entitled to receive (Gratis) No. 1 of a Series of Engravings illustrative of Scenes in the most popular Plays of Shakespeare.

The issue of No. 2 of THE SHAKESPEARE GALLERY will be duly announced in THE LONDON READER.

BOOK RECEIVED.

Good Things for Railway Readers. London: Lockwood and Co.—This volume of well-selected anecdotes is specially adapted for the amusement of railway travellers, and has the advantage of presenting something new, or if not entirely so, at least an old friend with a new face to the extent of some thousand different subjects. When it is announced that the compilation is by the author of the "Illustrated Railway Anecdote Book," sufficient will be said to guarantee its excellence.

NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

A POOR WOMAN.—We believe not.

UXOR.—A girl cannot marry her uncle, nor a man his aunt. C. J. M.—See "Chambers's Registry of Next of Kin, advertised for during the last 100 years."

MEMO.—No; a separation by mutual consent will not operate you from payment of your wife's debts.

T. T. W.—When a person has become bankrupt, actions to recover debts due to his estate are brought by his assignees.

A CONFEDERATE SYNPATIZER.—Not liable unless naturalized. You should claim the protection of the British consul, as a British subject.

PAUPER.—Yes; a married woman may obtain an order from a police-magistrate or a justice of the peace, to protect her earnings for her own use.

HENRY.—Parents are liable for necessities only for sons under age. A minor cannot be sued for debt, but he may be punished for obtaining goods by false pretences.

RADSTOCK.—No; a man cannot be compelled to provide for his wife's mother, or the wife or widow of his son, or his own brother or sister.

NELLIE ALLAN.—You ought not to have any difficulty about the realization of your wishes. What are the Yorkshire lads about that they should leave you at twenty only to "waste your sweetness on the desert air?"

N. J.—The person taking advantage of the plea of infancy, must prove that he was under age at the time when the goods were supplied, should an action be brought against him for the price.

GENERAL.—No; executors and administrators may not purchase the goods of the testator whom they represent—for, in so doing, they would have to contract with themselves, and to both buyer and seller, whence fraud might accrue.

A. T.—If a grocer piles up a large quantity of sugar in his shop, and tickets it at 4d. a pound, you may demand every ounce of it at that price, no matter how much he may lose by the transaction, or how much you buy.

JAMES MACDONALD.—It would be useless. It is a well-established rule of law, that a servant cannot sue his master for an injury sustained wholly through the negligence of a fellow-servant.

MARTHA.—You were wrong. A housemaid has been held to have been rightfully dismissed for persisting in leaving her master's house contrary to his orders, although her object in going out was to visit a dying mother.

P. O. G.—Persons under age can be made wards in Chancery by settling small sums of money upon them (not less than £100 it seems), and by filing a bill for the proper administration of the property.

H. P.—A girl of seven years of age may be married; at seventeen she may be appointed an executrix; and at twenty-one is of full age. Full age is completed on the day preceding the twenty-first anniversary of a person's birth.

UNEMPLOYED.—We know not how to advise you—the market is absolutely glutted with aspirants for similar employment; but it is possible that, with an introduction to a respectable publishing establishment, your pen might be made available in the desired channel.

A FIRST-CLASS BOY (HYTHE).—A master is not permitted to take his apprentice out of the kingdom without his consent; and cannot turn him away should he break any of his covenants, his remedy being by action, or by procedure before justices of the peace.

TRADER (LIVERPOOL).—Vessels in which butter is packed must be marked with the name of the seller, and have their weight and tare branded upon their top and body, otherwise a penalty is incurred, and the price of butter not so marked cannot be recovered of the purchaser.

GERANIUM.—Our law gives a written contract no superiority over a binding verbal one; but once reduced to writing, the general rule is, that parties are bound by the terms of the document, and may not vary or subtract from them, or attempt to explain away their plain meaning.

M. O. T. (PEVENSEY).—The law of England does not authorize a master to dismiss his servant because he or she has fallen into bad health. Sickness relieves servants from their duties while it lasts, and the master or mistress must not make any deductions from their wages on account of it.

ETHELINDA five years ago had a lover, and had every reason to think their love was mutual—but she listened to a person who spoke evil of him, and left the place where he resides, without leaving him the slightest clue to her whereabouts. She has since learnt what she heard of him was false: as she has now got a little fortune, she would like to marry; and as she does not think she could ever love another, she would like him to have the first choice. Could she with propriety write to him, containing all the circumstances, and offering to renew the correspondence? Certainly, and with more than conventional propriety—for it would only be consistent

with justice to make reparation. Our correspondent was wrong in listening to the voice of the slanderer—she was wrong in casting off her lover without a word of explanation; but we must say that she would make reparation in a generous and spirited manner.

R. L. H.—Lord Raglan lost his arm at the Battle of Waterloo.

W. F.—"Properest" is not a word used in the English language. Lord Byron's example has not been followed.

L. E.—Second love is generally stronger than first. Accept the gentleman, should his character be all that could be desired.

C. T. T.—The concealment of the dreadful affliction you have mentioned would be a complete bar to any action for breach of promise of marriage. It was a wicked deception; but blame the parents more than the poor girl.

ALPHONSE, being fair, and twenty years of age, thinks she is old enough to settle in life. She is short, rather inclined to embonpoint, very fair, having auburn hair, and light-hazel eyes; she has a lively disposition, and excellent temper.

H. S. W., an officer in the army, is desirous of meeting with a loving and affectionate wife. His income is £300 a year, with good prospects; he is tall, tolerably good-looking, and twenty-two years of age.

A. G.—Taking into consideration the hours of labour, the price of provisions and clothing, and the amount of mental anxiety and bodily labour called into requisition, the rate of wages is higher in England than in any other country in the world.

W. H. E. TUCKER and J. CRAWFORD.—You have, doubtless, respectable married acquaintances or relatives, and the most prudent course for you to take will be to consult them upon the subject of your letter. We have no faith in Platonic attachments and "customary strolls" with young ladies on summer evenings.

MYTLE A.—You can do nothing better than treat the young gentleman with marked indifference—avoiding pointedly every attempt on his part to attract your attention or join your company. Beyond a direct negative you can do nothing more consistently with maidenly delicacy. The writing is good and ladylike.

C. T. S.—"Cashier," derived from the French word "casser," means to discard, to deprive a person of his place or post: so that when an officer is cashiered, he is at once deprived of his commission—if he loses it, he cannot sell it, he is no longer a servant of the crown.

MARIE.—You were indiscreet, and exhibited the weak side of your character to the gentleman. A woman should weep for love, but never for anger. A cold rain will never bring forth flowers.

INQUIRER.—Alto-relievo, from the Italian is employed in sculpture to describe that part which stands out higher than the mass it is cut out of. Baso-relievo is cut into the mass, and is lower than the general surface. The Roman mile was a thousand paces.

A. F.—Sir Walter Scott was one of the most moral of writers. We do not recollect a line against which any sensible objection could be raised. Even Mrs. Stowe, who is somewhat of a fanatic, no more to be compared to Scott than chaff is to wheat, has, with some degree of magnanimity, pronounced that "the influence of his writings and whole existence on earth has been decidedly good."

RECLAIMED.—You need no physician, but your own self-reliance. Somebody has wisely remarked, that "the undoubting confidence that we shall enjoy health, is perhaps one of the best means of promoting it." Face the future like a man: think of your family, love your wife and children, work hard, read good books, and you will soon exclaim, "Throw physic to the dogs!"

LOTTY is very hasty-tempered, and she is engaged to a very hasty-tempered gentleman; she fears they will not agree. Hasty quarrels are short ones, and short ones are better than long ones. Lotty cannot expect to find an angel. It matters not what temper she marries; if her own is bad, it will work mischief, and she may make a slow-tempered man sulky for life—that would be worse fare than a hasty pudding, which is often a good one.

ICICLE complains that she can make herself very agreeable to strangers, but as soon as she becomes intimately acquainted with a person she begins to retreat; and so soon as one begins to like her she feels a restraint. This is a very common temperament. Such natures are best fitted for general society, and perhaps it is neither possible nor advisable to change them for their opposites, but just to make the best of them. Every temperament has its own peculiar mission. Perhaps Icicle will find one exception, and that may suffice for her domestic happiness.

MADELINE.—A gentleman (?) sent you the flower of the thorn-apple. What did he mean? He intended it either as a reproach or a rude insult. In the language of flowers, the thorn-apple means deceit. It languishes during the day, and avoids the sun. But on the approach of night the flowers revive, display their charms, and unfold their large bells—which nature has covered with purple, lined with ivory, and to which she has imparted an odour that attracts and intoxicates. It is a poisonous plant, and therefore dangerous to be allowed to grow where there are children. What flower shall you send him in return? A yellow pink, if you like—for that signifies disdain, contempt, scorn—on account of its being the least beautiful, the least fragrant of the pink tribe, and yet requires the most care. Or, if you wish to be very cross with him, you may send him a vine-leaf—for mischards tells us that the vine-tree produces three kinds c. fruit—intoxication, debauchery, and repentance.

E. T. J.—The origin of the beautiful substance, amber, has been, and continues to be, the theme of much discussion. Under the name of electrum, it was well known to the ancients—being so called from its possessing, in a high degree, with the aid of friction, the property of attracting towards it any light substances. It has as yet been obtained in the greatest quantities on the shores of the Baltic: on digging a few feet into the soil, or after a storm, it is found in large quantities, lying on the shore. We do not, however, hear of its being found inland, except at Fliehausen, in Germany; the top stratum there is sand, underneath lies a bed of clay; beneath that, again, there exists the remains of one of the antediluvian forests, in a state bordering upon coal, but still retaining the distinct marks of the woody fibre. This stratum is generally found to rest upon a bed of pyrites overlaying a bed of sand, in which the amber is found in great

abundance. Many of the ancient writers suppose it was derived from the same source as the resins and gums, to which they conceive it to be allied; but this story has been overruled, in favour of the more obvious one, that it is a species of pine bitumen, which, it has been admitted, is produced from vegetables which have decayed under peculiar circumstances.

D.—The Portuguese were the first to make a voyage to India by the way of the Cape of Good Hope, but there is every reason to believe that earlier navigators, the Arabians especially, rounded the Cape eight centuries previously. It is on evidence that a trade subsisted between Arabia and India at a very early period.

N. B.—You have two lovers—one is tall and handsome, but unsteady; the other is not good-looking, but he is a sober and remarkably industrious young man. He also entirely maintains his aged and invalid mother. Which shall you marry? Now, in the name of common-sense and propriety can you hesitate? The "ugly man," as you call him, is the better looking of the two—for he has a heart that beats to pure and noble impulses. The rake has no heart at all. If you marry him, you may expect to marry misery, beggary, ruffianism, and ultimately the workhouse.

C. J.—We are sorry to say that we do sometimes meet men who seem to think that any indulgence in an affectionate feeling is a weakness. They will return from a journey and meet their families with cold dignity, and move among their children with the distant and lofty splendour of the iceberg surrounded by its broken fragments. There is hardly a more unnatural sight on earth than one of those families without a heart. A father had better extinguish a boy's eyes than take away his heart. Who that has experienced the joys of friendship and values sympathy and affection, would not rather lose all that is beautiful in nature's scenery than be robbed of the hidden treasure of his heart. Cherish then your heart's best affections. Indulge in the warm and gushing emotions of filial, parental and fraternal love.

P. F.—Of the first introduction and spreading of gymnastics, there exists no accurate account. Homer, however, first tells us in "Iliad," Book II., that the Greek soldiers disembarked from the ships and played at quoits and at hurling the javelin on the beach; and again, Book xxiii., describes the games celebrated at the funeral of Patroclus, which consisted of chariot-races, boxing, wrestling, foot-races, throwing the disc, drawing the bow, and hurling the javelin. At first they seem to have been principally practised as combining amusement with the acquirement of bodily strength and agility; but at a later period games were dedicated to the gods, which were conducted with great ceremony, and honourable rewards bestowed on the conquerors. These rewards being called *athlos*, those who contended for them were called *athletes*.

A. A.—The first English comedy, "Ralph Roister Doister," was written by Nicholas Udall, head master of Eton, who wrote several Latin plays, to be acted in the long nights of winter, by his boys. "Gammer Gurton's Needle" was written twenty years afterwards. The latter comedy long held precedence in our dramatic annals. It was first produced in 1575, and has long been known as the production of Bishop Sili. It appears by this play, that the practice of entertaining the audience with music between the acts was called in the very infancy of the stage. The abuse of performing in churches led to the practice of performing plays in inn yards, on scaffolds, or on a stage erected in the street or upon a green adjoining a town or village, sometimes in the public halls of boroughs and cities, and sometimes in the dwellings of the nobility. There were two important persons always ready—Vice and the Devil—the latter a sort of wife to Mr. Vice, who, upon every occasion, received kicks without number. Mr. Vice generally possessed a lath or golden stick, and poor Mrs. Devil had much to endure. In the opinions of Mr. Collier and Mr. Hallam, the offspring of this happy pair are the beloved friends of our childhood—Mr. and Mrs. Punch.

P. G.—As it is the mind that raises men above animals, so it is the cultivation of the mind that raises one man above another. It is a noble thing to improve the mind; and what one has done can be done by another. We cannot all succeed to the same extent, but it is best to try for the highest prize. He who aims high is far more likely to hit his mark than he who either aims low or badly. Ignorance is the parent of nearly all crime and misery; ignorant people do things which those who are better taught never think of, and if they meet with misfortunes they are quite at a loss as to the proper means of remedying them. Ignorant people may be said to be stuck fast in a bog from which they will never get out, until they lay hold of the friendly hand of knowledge. But we often hear the inquiry—what is the use of knowledge? and there are many people who believe that knowledge is not worth the trouble it costs to get. There are few good things, however, which have not been despised or slighted when first brought under notice. How many useful inventions which have added to the welfare of mankind were laughed at when first made known! This should teach us not to be disengaged by ridicule; when once engaged in a good cause, we have only to press steadily onwards. Knowledge opens a man's eyes; he understands what is going on around him; he does not take things upon trust; he finds himself armed with new powers and capabilities. Who are the steadiest workmen?—those who have done most to improve their minds. Who are the best husbands and fathers?—those who have the best knowledge. We do not mean to assert that goodness and kindness cannot exist without education, for it is very possible for a man to be altogether unlearned, and yet be kind and trustworthy. A man may improve both his mind and his heart and yet know nothing of what is commonly called learning. But the chances are that if an ignorant man does right it will be only by accident: the educated man knows how and why he ought to do right and to avoid evil.

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